DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 331 363 HE 024 415

AUTHOR	Limbird, Martin; And Others
TITLE	The Korea Papers: Profiles in Educational Exchange. NAFSA Field Service Working Paper #10.
INSTITUTION	National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, Washington, DC. Field Service Program.
SPONS AGENCY	United States Information Agency, Washington, DC. Student Support Services Div.
PUB DATE	Oct 88
NOTE	100p.; Papers presented at the Advanced Professional Development Symposium on the Educational System of Korea, held in conjunction with the NAFSA Region VI Conference (Columbus, OH, October 25-29, 1988). Some pages contain very light type.
AVAILABLE FROM	NAFSA Publications Department, 1860, 19th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009 ($7.45).
PUB TYPE	Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	College Students; Cultural Differences; Educational Anthropology; Educational Policy; Foreign Countries; *Foreign Students; Higher Education; *Professional Development; Religious Differences; *Social Differences; Teachers; Universities; Values
IDENTIFIERS	Seoul National University (South Korea); *South Korea

ABSTRACT

This document comprises four papers which were presented at the Advanced Professional Development Symposium on the Educational System of Korea. The papers discuss various topics on the education of Koreans both at home and in the United States including employment for U.S.-Trained Koreans in Korea, and linguistic, cultural and educational differences between Americans and Koreans. The first paper, "The American Experience in Retrospect: Views of U.S. Educated Koreans Inside Korean Conglomerates" by Martin Limbird, considers U.S.-educated Koreans as employment policy makers, employers' views of practical training, U.S. alumni views on adjustment into the Korean corporate structure, and the value to them of "learning to reason." The second paper, "Korean Ideas and Values" (Michael C. Kalton) discusses Korean culture including family and social relationships, decorum, age, filial piety, Unhae ("gracious favors"), personalism, education, and male/female attitudes. The third paper, by James H. Robinson, is titled "Linguistic, Cultural and Educational Contexts of Korea" and considers linguistic differences, syntax, phonology, sociolinguistics, contrastive rhetoric, perseverance, politeness, obedience, educational differences, the study ethic, cooperation, plagiarism, The final paper is "The Natives are Restless: Anthropological Research on a Korean University" by Fredric Marc Roberts and Chun Kyung-soo. It discusses political activism at Seoul National University, tensions between students and teachers, and political pressures. References accompany each paper. (LPT)

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NAFSA
Association of International Educators
1860 19th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009
Central Office 202/462-4811
Fax 202/667-3419
Telex 7401864 CIAOUC

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These four papers were presented at the Advanced Professional Development Symposium on the Educational System of Korea, held in conjunction with the NAFSA Region VI conference in Columbus, Ohio from October 25-29, 1988.

The workshop and the publication of these papers were funded through a grant from the Advising, Teaching and Special Programs Division of the U.S. Information Agency.

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THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN RETROSPECT:

VIEWS OF U.S-EDUCATED KOREANS INSIDE KOREAN BUSINESS CONGLOMERATES

Martin Limbird

Introduction

During the mid-1980s several U.S. university foreign student advisers (FSA's) began receiving inquiries from former students who had returned to their home country of Korea.* The pattern was strikingly similar -- these alumni, now employed by Korean business conglomerates, or *chaebols* needed to hire Korean graduates in several specific fields: how could the alumnus get in touch with prospective candidates for the openings? Would the FSA identify the "best and brightest" among those eligible and give the alumnus their names? At about the same period, the picture of three smiling Koreans sporting the names of their American alma mater on their tee-shirts appeared in American newspapers, along with an advertisement by the Daewoo Corporation, one of Korea's most well-known conglomerates, that hired them. The ad proclaimed pride in the "made in America" brains the firm had hired.

These efforts to hire Koreans for jobs in their home country were welcome news to the FSA, as the competition for desirable university teaching positions, particularly in the Seoul area, was increasingly tight. Further, news from recently returned alumni seeking teaching and research positions indicated longer and longer gaps of time before they could find any professional employment. In fact, some Korean graduates in that period did not even wait to attend their American graduation ceremony in order to rush home to get in line for a good university job.

At issue for Korean students and their foreign student advisers were several specific questions. How do the *chaebols* recruit in the United States, if at all?[1] What academic majors were considered "hot topics"? How important is industrial experience in the United States to getting a *chaebol* job? What kinds of language and communications skills are most valued? How much value is placed on being familiar with American cultural patterns?

By discovering the answers to these and other questions, Koreans studying in the U.S. could expect to make wise use of their American experience. The closer the "fit" between U.S. educational experience and the needs of the Korean corporate community, the more valuable the investment in

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*The author is grateful to the Korean American Educational Commission for its support of this research project. Special thanks are also extended to the administrators of Yonsei University's Graduate School of International Studies for their willingness to invite the author to be the institute's first Fulbright research fellow. Comments and advice on early drafts of this paper by Dennis Peterson and Fred Carriere are sincerely appreciated.

overseas training would be. The foreign student adviser would clearly be in a key position to use the results of an inquiry.

To address these questions, a research plan built on qualitatively based personal interviews was devised. This approach was chosen despite the risk of "courtesy bias" (Jones 1963) that threatens foreigners' research integrity in Asia. A pool of 161 prospective interviewees was drawn up from employment lists of seven *chaebols* of top executives holding M.S. or Ph.D. degrees from U.S. universities. The list was expanded to 191 to include other Korean corporate executives known personally by the researcher. A list of the seven *chaebols* as well as the interviewees' major fields and their American alma mater is found in Appendix A. Interviewees were selected purposively to provide the broadest possible distribution of academic majors and U.S. institutions.

Introductions of the researcher to the interviewees were arranged, by means of a knowledgeable intermediary, with interviews held in the executive's office for approximately one hour. Every interview traced the interviewee's path to his current post, expanding to include those elements of his United States experience that was valuable to his work, and what he would advise others seeking *chaebol* jobs to be sure to do.

U.S.-Educated Koreans as Employment Policy Makers

Employment decision-makers within the *chaebols* were the first individuals to be contacted. The respondents, all of whom resided in the Seoul metropolitan area, fell into two distinct categories, based on their own careers: those who represented the more conventional ascent of the corporate ladder; and the so-called "mavericks," whose career paths were very diverse. One such maverick, the CEO of the major conglomerate's flagship firm, had supported himself through graduate school by scrubbing floors and working as a janitor in two different American states before earning a graduate assistantship. For him, this direct experience in working low level jobs in the United States gave him insights about America and American values that he finds indispensable today in his role as a decision-maker. With this attitude, he urges all Koreans in the United States to include such experiences in their educational

program abroad, especially if they want to join a *chaebol*. He observed that these experiences have made it easier for him to know how to deal with Americans and other foreigners, having had to work hard for his own support while in graduate school, a somewhat more normal pattern in the United States than in other countries. This CEO also strongly stated the advantages of out-of-class experience to Koreans as a means for understanding the democratic nature of United States society. "The basic raw material of (Korean) colleges is youths who've depended on rote memory and conformity to what the high school curriculum and their teachers say is important. Whereas they are diligent and study very hard, their efforts are misapplied to acquiring facts without learning how to think. What we in the *chaebols* want from American-educated graduates are, first, professionally capable minds, but also those who are very bright, who can act naturally and be relaxed in a variety of cross-cultural settings, and those who can 'read foreign minds'." This CEO's belief is that such a sense of openness cannot easily occur within Korean society but can be acquired during a study experience abroad, especially if the student becomes immersed in the foreign culture. Because this man sits on most of the committees that hire U.S.-trained Koreans, he can directly show his preference for those qualities desired from new employees and challenge those ideals of conformity his colleagues may prefer.

Another maverick, the president of his own small corporation, is president of his university alumni group even though he did not actually receive a degree from the United States. Rather than complete degree requirements, he left the campus in the early 1970's to find work in a major American city selling products imported from Korea as a street peddler. Within eighteen months, this entrepreneur had done over $1 million in sales of imported garments and wigs, earning enough to return home and found his own company. As an employer, he has not yet sought a U.S.-trained Korean for his firms, but he asserts without question that his business experiences in the United States have meant far more than just money to his success in public affairs and private business. Further, he observed, "what I learned in the United States in business is far more important to me now than what I learned in the classroom." Another corporate president interviewed stated that he expected more from a United States graduate than just having a degree. "I'm placing a great deal of importance on long-term

sustained involvement with Americans outside the classroom. A résumé from U.S. graduates who want to work in our firm should clearly indicate that they were involved with American society." This executive also sends his employees without prior U.S. experience to take part in internships in the United States in order to have direct involvement with business practices abroad. His wish is to have a bi-cultural staff that can effectively deal with foreigners. "The new employee must be able to sell himself to me as well as to foreigners outside the firm. We need people with top quality communications skills and understanding of foreign cultures to do this for our firm." In point of fact, this company president had just returned from Eastern Europe where he had opened business channels thought to be impossible due to Korean government restrictions only a few months before the interview.

Dealing with nationalities other than Americans, particularly Third World nations, has become another overnight priority, according to a U.S.-trained engineer who serves as a high-level adviser on technology policy for the Korean government. "We will soon establish our own version of the U.S. Peace Corps. This decision is based on two facts: firstly, our shift away from dependence on the United States as our major market requires that we know more about our neighbors; secondly, our new-found role as the most successful of the 'NIC's' or newly industrialized countries. Along with this notoriety comes the obligation to be more active a donor of goods and services to less fortunate countries. Therefore, we must be culturally and linguistically ready to work with these countries in our new role. Koreans studying alongside students from these Third World countries while in the United States can gain first-hand experience to lead our Third World activities in the future."

This shift away from acquiring only English language and American cultural exposure has proven to be a real asset to one corporate executive whose firm does 100 percent of its business abroad, mainly in North Africa. "I'm so glad I kept up my French abilities from undergrad school. As I look back on my career, it was my French that tipped the balance in gaining advancement and new opportunities."

Multinational corporation executives with undergraduate as well as graduate degrees from the United States are another example of those who have had unusual career paths to the top of their

fields. One such executive pointed out that his firm transferred him back from the United States to his native country, but he intended to maintain his United States citizenship and return to America at the end of his tour abroad. On the other hand, his position about what he was looking for in United States-educated Koreans for his accounting and financial services firm branch in Seoul was extremely clear: "If I had to choose between two equally qualified Koreans who had studied in the United States, I'd take the one with the best family connections and the best high school background. It doesn't make so much difference where I went to high school because I'm considered an expatriate, but these ties are extremely important for business development when we hire Koreans." A second multinational firm executive with an energy-related investment base, reinforced this view: "The high school you went to is still the single most important determinant for employment once you have had your United States degree. The meritocracy is increasing here, but still, *yangban* status accorded by having graduated from Kyonggi Boys' High School, for example, will open doors for you all your life." As a graduate of such a high school before continuing his education in the United States, the executive described his own path to becoming nearly totally bi-cultural, a major asset in reaching his position today. "I find I have to completely assume another identity depending on the nationality of the people I deal with. The reason I am able to do this is because when I first went to the States, I spent the first several months as a volunteer in a home for the aged in New Jersey. This is how I learned English, but more than that, I immediately was absorbed into the American culture."

This expansion of the importance of going to the right high school was not shared by another maverick, the CEO of a multinational pharmaceutical firm. "I'm a pragmatist -- if they can do the work, I want them, no matter where they went to high school." On the other hand, his experiences with United States-trained MBA's was not very positive. "These guys come and tell me after they've been here two weeks they intend to have my job within two years . . . well, that spirit of individualism doesn't fit with our Korean sense of teamwork. The new employee must be more patient and learn why we do the things the way we do. To be frank, locally trained MBA's don't give us this problem, don't expect to be paid more than normal, and they work just as hard as the American MBA's. These local

graduates will be even tougher competition for United States MBA's in the future.[2] They are company men from the very first day!"

Whether expressed or implied, company loyalty is a prime expectation from new employees by both mavericks as well as the establishment corporate leaders interviewed. In the latter category, several United States alumni had reached their positions of leadership by the easiest route: their father had founded the conglomerate. In these cases, loyalty to the firm takes on a very personal connection and is therefore extended as a very important mentality expected from subordinates.

In summary, this group of executives had several clear messages to United States-educated Koreans seeking work in the Korea corporate world. Firstly, the traditional values of hard work and respect for the system (and one's seniors) is paramount. Secondly, the United States degree does not automatically entitle one to special privileges or a "fast track" to promotions. Advancement is still heavily based on traditional age-determined progressions. Finally, there is no substitute for going to the "right" high school in Seoul!

Practical Training: Employers' Views

The importance of practical training, or work experience outside the classroom in one's professional field, was discussed with all corporate employment decision-makers. Concerning such experience, several interviewees pointed out that employment experience gained in Korea before doing advanced study in the United States helps establish one's "Korean track record," which is highly credible to local conglomerates. This same experience is felt to be very useful to students as they seek to adapt and apply theories taught abroad to local professional situations. One interviewee advised: "With Korean work experience, you know the world you'll go back to professionally, and so you can be more selective about what you study in the U.S." One United States-trained MBA who is president of his own consulting firm noted, "my job hunting after the MBA before I started my own firm was greatly enhanced by my proven work experience in Korea." A *chaebol* executive who worked in a Korean bank overseeing industrial loans for two years before starting his Ph.D. studies in the United States said that

"that exposure to decision-making and the practical side of finance was a real plus for me." These examples confirm the value employment decision-makers place on having practical work experience at home before studies in the United States.

Although their attitudes about work experience in the United States were uniformly positive, these employment decision-makers expressed a number of qualifications. Those interviewed had almost without exception remained in the United States well beyond the limit of one year of authorized practical training granted to non-immigrant students.[3] This fact made it difficult for them to relate to the benefits of a relatively short stay after graduation. This group recommended that practical training in the United States, to be of significant advantage before returning to Korea, should be two to four years. Experience in selling one's ideas, negotiating contracts, developing proposals through to carrying out entire projects, and having direct budget as well as personnel decision-making were cited as desired experiences to be gained while working in the U.S. private sector. One decision-maker noted that U.S. management experiences are not nearly as valuable to a Korean planning to come home as similar experience in Korea. "Our decision-making within the *chaebol* is very centralized, where the lower echelon staff are expected to do what they're told, without seeking hardly any input from them. By implication, then, exposure to a more open system of management decision-making can cause difficulty in adjusting back to the more 'top down' nature of our internal system."

Another top executive who was trained in, and later taught, economics abroad observed that his analytical training and openness to a broad range of ideas were sometimes a disadvantage to him. "This conglomerate is intensely political, a closed society, where blind loyalty to the chairman's ideas is wiser than trying to change things, even if you know there's a better way." The chief personnel officer of a multinational corporation stated this point more explicitly: "Our (Korean) neo-Confucian values honor others on the basis of age first, measured in chronological years with the company in the private sector. The returned U.S. graduate who doesn't respect this structure does more than undermine his own corporate career -- he threatens our whole society with its fundamental principles."

Views from the Inside: What U.S. Alumni Say

The views of *chaebol* employees' own individual paths from American campuses into the Korean corporate structure provide a fascinating description of adjustment, adaptation and application of learning acquired in and outside the U.S. classroom. Each interviewee was asked what aspects of his American educational experience were valuable to becoming employed and advancing in the *chaebol*. One very outspoken faculty member of a Korean university provided his own counterpoint as an academic to this question: "The title of American Ph.D. is all that matters." Within the Korean corporate world, the responses are far more complex and instructive.

First and foremost, alumni interviewed cite the high quality of their graduate research training as their most essential asset in being hired. "My ability to reason and to think analytically is my most useful skill, and the reason the firm said they wanted to hire me" was most often stated. The challenge, while in the United States, of having their opinions and new ideas sought by their American major professors was a key to unleashing the alumni's creative abilities, largely held in check by the more restrictive Korean high school and undergraduate educational system. The effect of this approach to learning, while liberating to the learner and representing a skill of inestimable personal value, presents problems of a practical nature once inside the *chaebol*. "No one asks me what I think; they just tell me what to do, and order me around," reported one Ph.D. in a *chaebol* research institute. Another employee in the same firm said he enjoyed his assignments in making economic projections for his firm, but observed "the company doesn't need someone with a U.S. Ph.D. to do the kind of work I'm doing - it's master's level routine work." These examples support the general feeling that the most valuable skills one has gained from study abroad are not routinely used by the employer to good advantage. It is important to note that those with such attitudes most often had little or no employment experience in the United States. In addition, these feelings are most prevalent among those who are working in staff level assignments within the *chaebols*' research institutes rather than in line management positions. Those in the research jobs expressed their initial preference for finding a teaching or research job at a university or government institute upon returning home. As those who had prepared themselves for the

more scholarly pursuits, the failure to gain a desired position and the status of an academic led them to consider a private sector job as second or third choice. The relatively higher pay as a *chaebol* researcher was initially attractive, but the rigors of the minimum fifty-six hour work week and the pressure to respond to higher authority for direction have for many become a major burden. One possible explanation for this group's lack of job satisfaction is that they tend to be recent returnees from the United States. Correlation of these factors would be an interesting topic for a future study.[4]

Those alumni interviewed who are in line management positions have generally had more positive experiences in terms of being able to use their creative skills. One engineer with experience in the American auto industry was hired to effectively design, build and operate the research institute for his *chaebol*'s automotive industry. "I came home as the first person in my field, and I have had responsibility to completely oversee the development of this operation, starting with seven employees initially in 1984 to over 800 now. I had to start from scratch, learning personnel and budget control as a went along. It was tricky!" Another Ph.D. engineer in charge of a large telecommunications division within a *chaebol* observed that he could have had a position in the research side of his division with initially higher pay and much more job security than he has now. "I have to produce sales and manage the division, showing success almost every day -- I have no job security at all, but I love the challenge." Another alumnus, president of his company, was hand-picked over a number of other more senior executives to assume his current post, but he feels that same contradiction of excitement of experience over the job's responsibilities in contract to the total lack of job security. "I could be removed just as fast as I have risen in the company: the chairman decides all." In all cases cited above, the ability to use their creative skills was a major source of job satisfaction, but that too had its limits, as placed by the hierarchy above them which sets major directions for the *chaebol*.

The feeling of being perceived as an outsider by other employees was described by nearly every interviewee as significant in adjusting to the corporate work world. This feeling ranged from one of passive indifference to active rejection, at least initially, depending on the individual case. One alumnus described his strategy in confirming to become one of the "insiders": "I decided to work later every

night, to come in on Sundays, to clearly work harder than my counterparts, act professionally at all times, and really try to get along with other staff through being friendly, but not too familiar at first." This same formula was described with minor variations by several interviewees as the key to gaining a sense of belonging to the firm. One Ph.D. who has started his own company after several years as an employee in another firm pointed out the difficulty in becoming a member of the corporate team after years in the United States. "All during my graduate work I was encouraged to conduct independent research and to work on my own. It was really hard for me to redevelop the sense of belonging to a group within the corporation here after that emphasis on individualism."[5] The implication of this observation points out the indirect disadvantages of emphasis on individual inquiry in American universities to the more team-oriented nature of industrial activity in Korea and other Asian countries.

Adjustment to the emphasis of teamwork with peers and subordinates was reported to be far easier than accepting the limitations of the based advancement system, according to many of the alumni interviewed. This system, common to virtually all bureaucracies in Korea, assigns staff to a slot within the promotion schedule on the basis of year of birth. "If you're forty, you are paid and treated like everyone else in the company with similar responsibilities at that age. There is very little incentive to be creative because the advancement is pretty automatic. My approach is to just not rock the boat," said one *chaebol* engineer in a staff position. The limitations the system places on "rising stars" within the *chaebols* is recognized by some top managers, however. "We have this superstar in the company right now who is only thirty-five but he is miles ahead of his peers . . . and most of his bosses, too," said one company president, "but we have to give him incentives or he'll leave. My problem is to know how far I can go in salary and other prerequisites without getting his peers mad at him and me too." The most effective means the president just quoted has used beyond simple salary incentives to keep promising U.S.-trained employees is his leadership role model to other U.S. graduates within the company. "The reason I stay with the *chaebol* is because I respect the president," one fellow American graduate observed. "I can't stand my direct boss who orders me around, and I hate not being able to be with my wife and kids due to the long hours I have to spend on the job, but I wouldn't leave the job as

long as the president is where he is. He is evidence of hope that the company will break out of the incredible limitations of this age-based hierarchy." The above is an example of how U.S.-trained *chaebol* executives represent changing attitudes within the corporation. Whether the more open structure of advancement will become normal procedure, or if it would represent a positive change for the corporation as a whole remains to be seen.

Attitudes toward industrial work experience in the United States were discussed with all those interviewed. Even though work experience in Korea was generally thought to be more valuable in being offered a *chaebol* job, interviewees felt that work experience in the United States business world offered a number of very valuable long-term advantages. It is more important to note that many of those interviewed had worked three to eight years in America, well beyond the normal one-year limitation on non-immigrant student employment. One alumnus who intends to hire six to seven U.S.-trained engineers in 1988/1989 stressed the value of industrial experience after the Ph.D. "What we need is people who are not only highly qualified in a 'hot topic' area, but who have budget and personnel control experience, too. This you can only get in industry." These were precisely the skills he acquired during his five-year stay in the United States. Another alumnus who had only six months of practical training was able to apply his Ph.D. research to a practical problem during this brief period. For him, "My practical training has helped me very much back home in Korea. It was much more like the real world than life on campus. I was particularly goad to work with the office staff to see the administrative aspects of a business enterprise."

To contrast these opinions, one Ph.D. in economics felt that to stay in the United States for practical training would have broken ties with his most important asset gained from study in the United States: his network of six fellow economists with whom he studied in America, all of whom immediately returned home after graduation. "It was a very wise choice for me to stick together with these guys in the States as well as to come back with them, because they are now very well placed in middle level government, banking and university positions. We help each other all the time." By choice, therefore, there are examples of alumni who recognize the disadvantages of delaying return to Korea after

completing degree requirements. Another interviewee who was unable to find a practical training job felt that such experiences would not have been useful unless they were with a large firm. "I didn't have time even to see an assembly line, much less work on one," said the mechanical engineer. "My assistantship was on a twelve-month basis, so I had to stay in the lab almost year 'round." Nevertheless, the opinion generally held by those without work experience in the United States is this: "It is something all Koreans want, but it's hard to arrange."

Another point of consensus was on the importance of developing close ties with other Koreans while in the United States. One such opinion reflected the general view: "During our undergraduate days, we hardly have time to meet our fellow classmates or make friends beyond our major within our Korean university. While we are in the United States, we can interact with other Koreans from lots of other disciplines and Korean universities. These new friends complement our friendship networks back home, or replace these networks if we fail to keep in touch with our old friends." The importance of these networks can hardly be understated, as they are personal bridges over the formal conforming structure of Korean society that limits easy access to unknown persons. As one alumnus put it, "by knowing another Korean, I gain access to his network of friends, just as he does mine." With the heavy emphasis on the development of these contacts, little wonder that Koreans on United States campuses are considered to be inward-looking, with limited evident contact with or interest in other nationalities. "Spending time building these networks is a rational decision, even if it is at the expense of meeting American," reported one U.S. graduate teaching social sciences at a Seoul university.

Getting acquainted with American friends and families was, however, part of the United States educational experience of many executives interviewed. "My daughter always asks about her grandparents in America, a couple who meant very much to our family. We met them through church, and we still keep in contact," reported one executive. Host families program assignments were relatively infrequent among the alumni interviewed, but those who had such experiences were grateful for the program's benefits. For most interviewees who worked in the United States after graduation, their closest friendships were formed from among fellow workers rather than among fellow students while in

graduate school. One interviewee who had extensive contacts with American society in his role as the parent of a school-aged daughter remarked that he learned much more of use to his career as a social science policy researcher through out-of-class contacts than in his university lectures. "We haven't had any experiences with democratic institutions like you Americans have. The experience of being involved in the PTA at school and being a volunteer member of a city parks advisory committee showed me clearly how citizen involvement and responsibility are essential to good government." On balance, then, personal involvement with Americans and American institutions outside the classroom was judged to be positive, even if somewhat infrequently included in the interviewees' experiences in the United States.

A number of specific cases that should be included in this analysis involve long-term problems associated with return home to Korea. One scholar remained in the United States fifteen years, mainly because he could not find a desirable teaching position in Korea. The longer he remained in the United States, the more he felt like a "marginal man," not really belonging to the local culture. The greater frustration was that he continued to feel like a marginal man in Korea after his return as well, because he felt branded by his students as being to Americanized. Another situation experienced by four interviewees was having their families remain in the United States where the children were very well established in school and the wives were not enthusiastic about returning home to assume subservient relationships in the husband's family. As a result, the husbands are literally married to their jobs, with all parental responsibilities being handled by the wives residing in America.

In the single case of a female Korean MBA who was interviewed, she felt frustrated by the bias she felt within the business community against her because of her gender. She had held jobs in two multinational firms since returning home, but she resigned both jobs when the promised advancement beyond her role as glorified secretary did not materialize. Now she has established her own management consulting firm, with high hopes that she will do better on her own. The fact, however, is that it is extremely difficult to break out of the sexual stereotypes assigned women in the private sector -- and women are no better off within the *chaebols* than anywhere else in Korea.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings from the many interviews reported suggest a number of points of agreement of interest to future Korean students headed for Korean private sector jobs after they receive United States degrees and to foreign student advisers on United States campuses as well. Based on these conclusions, several recommendations should be considered for action by institutions and individuals interested in enhancing the U.S. educational experience of those same Korean students.

Summary Observations

Because of the innate potential for the interviewees to report positively on their United States education and experiences, it was important to maintain objectivity. In retrospect, some alumni clearly had personal experiences that involved unhappy memories of events within and beyond their control, including homesickness, financial problems, alienation and lack of interest in them by Americans. On the other hand, there was an overwhelming consensus that the American stay was a positive one for all of those interviewed, particularly in the sense of accomplishing their degree objective. This achievement is seen even more clearly in terms of the extremely heavy burden of possible failure to receive the desired degree, a clear and concrete failure for both the student and his family. Several interviewees observed that they would not have been able to return to Korea and fact their families and friends if they had failed to graduate.

Foremost among the advantages of United States postgraduate study mentioned in the interviews was "learning to reason." The intense pressure to demonstrate one's knowledge of facts in the process of going through the Korean educational system resulted in strict rote memorization as the means to academic success before study in the United States. Because the foundation of United States graduate training is in methodology of research techniques, actually learning how to conduct inquiry is often more important than the result of the inquiry. This attribute was most succinctly cited by high-level employment decision-makers as the key to corporate advancement in high technology fields. Such knowledge looms even larger in the future as Korean corporations engage in pure research rather than

relying on expensive labor and licensing agreements to produce goods and services locally, based currently on imported technologies.

In terms of their feelings about their overall American experience, the interviewees' relative emphasis on their academic training resulted in only limited expression of affection for the American way of life. As observed above, the consequence that Koreans have limited interaction while in the United States beyond superficial social contacts with non-Koreans has resulted in their marginal familiarity with American institutions, customs and values. In fact, Korea's very long history of cultural homogeneity acts as a barrier to appreciating the strengths of American attitudes, particularly in sexual and racial equality. While there is a clear recognition of merit as the prime consideration for advancement, Korean accordance of *yangban* (higher) status to the more highly educated has continued a hierarchical social structure prevalent in contemporary Korean corporate structure and in everyday life. In a sense, the interviewees who felt limited by this hierarchy in their own jobs still recognized that they could not transfer an attitude of an open society, American-style, to Korea, nor did they seem to want to change Korean society with these values. American high technology was what was sought, without adapting and applying the social structure that made it possible.

The foregoing observation is not meant to imply that living among Americans did not have its advantages, but those advantages were more to understand how Americans think and act than to emulate their patterns. One value common to both Koreans and Americans, having good human relations skills, was stressed as an important by-product of studying in the United States. The alumni interviewed often noted this as a quality they appreciated in American society, but they generally directed their efforts in this skill to building networks among the fellow Korean students with whom they studied there. Many pointed out that their circle of acquaintances in Korea had been severely limited to those with whom they shared the same academic major in Korean universities, rarely having a chance to make friends with Koreans in other disciplines or in other universities. A wider range of Korean friends, with life-long associations, may be formed in the United States, and these friendships are perceived as important human relations contacts for one's career. Attitudes about the correct age for Koreans to go

to the United States were consistent regarding the choice between undergraduate versus graduate study. All interviewees stressed the importance of completing the first degree in Korean, then continuing to the United States for advanced work. This position was taken not because of the relative quality of undergraduate instruction, but because it is during the undergraduate years that one establishes the network of friendships essential to a career. The interviewees felt just as strongly about keeping in close touch with these friends while abroad -- through letters, Christmas cards and return visits whenever possible. To break ties with one's age group is tantamount to estrangement from the most important source of help after returning to find a job, meeting a prospective spouse, etc.

Finally, the American experience offers a sense of freedom away from the rigors of a highly structured society into a more open milieu of academic pursuit. Coming from an environment that gives high recognition to age and status, the korean student is often overcome with doubts about how to treat others whose position in his realm is not clear. This freedom manifests itself in many ways, from apparent indifference to the subtle informality of American society to expressions of respect for others to such a degree as to inhibit normal interaction. One thing is certain: The Korean bound for a private sector job knows clearly that he or she must be prepared to fit back into the proper niche in society on returning. Hence the degrees of freedom experienced while in the United States are carefully thought out and restrained.

Recommendations

With the relaxation of travel and foreign currency transfer and easier access to passports for overseas study, the relatively more affluent Korean family can more likely send its offspring abroad for further study. As a result, the numbers of Koreans on United States campuses will probably rise in the coming decade. On the other hand, opportunities for study in Australia, the United Kingdom and on the European continent are being widely publicized in Korea in the late 1980s. The most effective way to promote study on United States campuses will continue to be through active efforts by Korean-based alumni, principally those in university teaching positions, who recommend a specific institution. Although many informal United States university alumni groups meet regularly in Seoul, most American universities have not maintained regular contacts with their Korean alumni through their alumni association offices. It is therefore important to initiate and/or maintain communication with officers of these informal groups if admissions referrals are sought.

A number of alumni offices in the United States have also organized visits to Korea by ranking university administrators, as well as prominent alumni. The results of these efforts are admittedly long-term when funding is the objective, but joint research proposals, exchange internships and commercial joint ventures have been concluded as a result of such visits. One possibility with exciting prospects is the establishment of short courses in the United States or in Korea addressing contemporary topics such as labor relations, international trade or high technology research applications. Another example of ties would be to invite distinguished alumni to the home campus to advise the university on issues related to better serving Korean students and campus-Korean relations. Those businessmen interviewed recognized the prestige attached to receiving such an invitation.

Foreign student and academic advisers need to be aware of which fields of study will be in most demand by Korean firms and to publicize them frequently. For example, the May 13, 1988, Korea Herald published a projection of such likely needs for the coming years. There were four categories of technologies that would receive major attention, with four common elements of basic research, appropriate project management technology, systems engineering applications, and the general area of

measurement. The four fields included microelectronics, information technology, new materials development, health and life science, and exploration of oceans, air and space. In the industrial sector, changes that build on the comparative advantages of Korean industries, expand technologically intensive industries, and encourage manpower development must be made, and Korean students in the United States need up-to-date information about policies, placement and requirements. With such information, U.S. universities can help students plan and carry out their programs for entry into the private sector of the Korean economy.

Foreign student advisers faced with the frustrations of helping Koreans make the most of their American experience should recognize the long-term value of practical training for them. These advisers must work closely with the students' academic advisers to arrange for career-enhancing job experience. Regular announcements of successful placements will surely aid in this process.

Perceptions by Koreans of a relative insensitivity by American social scientists invite analysis by campus officials. The lack of Asian examples and the surfeit of Western culture cases for study have resulted in widespread dissatisfaction among Korean social scientists with advanced degrees in the United States. Reactions from graduates in the Korean private sector and local universities suggest that much should be done to recognize Asian cultural differences in approaches to social science problems. Asking Koreans to help adapt curriculum to meet their needs is a possible first step when dissatisfaction is expressed.

In closing, while the legacy of a United States education completed by Korean private sector executives is significant, the potential for increased recognition of its future impact is even greater. This is not to suggest that centralized planning and coordination of these educational relations be established, but that attention to the impact of the initiative of these individuals can reap greater rewards at all levels. Just as relations between Korea and the United States have evolved from patron in the 1940s and 1950s to that of partners in the 1980s, we must redouble our efforts to build lasting bridges of mutual understanding through educational exchange to realize the prospects for cooperation in the era of Pacific Rim development in the future. This can best be achieved through improving the educational

and living experiences of Koreans on U.S. campuses and further providing opportunities for Americans to study and learn more about Korea.

References

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End Notes

1. The method of recruiting from Korean undergraduate schools is very well known. During the first week in November, all *chaebols* and major banks receive applications from and many administer their own separate written examinations to prospective employees. During fall 1987, 130,000 applicants tested for 13,000 places.

2. One employment area where United States-trained MBA's are still apparently preferred is the multinational banking sector in Seoul. *Chaebol* executives interviewed believe that the salary levels and working conditions in these foreign banks are close to United States domestic levels, much higher than those common in the *chaebols*.

3. In all cases those interviewed were beneficiaries of preference petitions for permanent residency, and remained legally in the United States.

4. One possible explanation for this group's lack of job satisfaction is that they tended to be recent returnees from the United States. Correlation of these factors would be an interesting topic for a future study.

5. In addition to overcoming patterns of independent work in favor of teamwork, there is often a resentment from subordinates within the *chaebol* that clearly exists and must be acknowledged. One member of a United States graduate's staff put it this way: "Those of us who started at the bottom know the foreign educated men often bring important skills that will help the company's growth, but we resent it if they get this high pay and don't work hard. We have some Koreans come back from second rate American universities where we believe all they did was drive fast cars and have a good time."

KOREAN IDEAS AND VALUES

Michael C. Kalton

Assumptions about the ways things are and what is worthwhile or correct vary widely from culture to culture. Between Korea and America there are differences in this regard which often cause misunderstandings and frustrations when the two cultures come into contact with one another. It is hoped that the discussion presented here will contribute in some degree to lessening this problem.

Beyond that, there is another, more positive result which can come from our understanding another culture. Familiarity with only one culture limits one to the viewpoint of that culture; while one benefits from its strengths, one also suffers from its limitations, which are often directly related to those very strengths. This is where the understanding of another culture and its values can become an enrichment. At some points it may open up new options in our approach to life; at others it may bring a new level of self-awareness regarding the limitations inherent in views once unquestioningly accepted as correct or ideal. In this respect, the person who is bicultural, be it by birth or by learning, enjoys the potential for a kind of flexibility and insight not readily available to others.

What are some of the fundamental ideas and values which are common in Korea but different from typical American perspectives? In other words, in what respect is the Korean way of thinking different from that of Americans? And why do the Koreans behave so differently in many ways from the Americans? These questions are closely related. The ideas and values, or the way of thinking, affect the way people behave in everyday life.

We must recognize at the outset, of course, that ideas and values do change in time in every society. Not all the ideas and values cherished by one generation in America, for example, are accepted fully by the next generation. But when we place the ideas and values shared by most Americans next to those shared by most Koreans (including those recently arrived in the United States) we can see a sharp contrast. Among many differences, the following three stand out: the view of and weight given to family and social relationships, the importance attached to education, and the approach to male and female roles and relationships. In this essay we shall take up each of these in turn.

This paper was originally published by as No. 7 of The Philip Jaisohn Memorial Papers (1979), and is reprinted with permission.

Although Buddhism flourished in Korea for a long time, particularly between the 5th and 14th centuries, it is the Confucian tradition that has most deeply influenced the ideas and values of the Korean people since the 14th century. In the long centuries of its predominance, Buddhism had grown to be a tremendous economic and political power; in order to crush that power once and for all, the rulers of the Yi dynasty (1392-1910) adopted Confucianism, in the form now referred to as Neo-Confucianism, as the central and orthodox tradition. Neo-Confucianism was thus deliberately introduced as a instrument to suppress Buddhist influence in Korean society. This policy succeeded, and although many Buddhist temples continued to exist, by the 16th century their influence had largely waned and Neo-Confucianism came to predominate in the intellectual and spiritual life of Korea. In many ways, the subtle difference between Korea on the one hand, and Japan on the other, can be traced to this fact.

In any event, except among a small number of people, Confucius and his disciples are no longer revered as sages in modern Korea. The schoolhouses in the countryside that exclusively taught Confucian texts have disappeared from the scene, and in modern colleges and universities Confucianism is no longer the heart of the curriculum but simply a specialized topic pursued by academic specialists. Most Koreans are perhaps not even aware that many of their fundamental ideas and values are derived from Confucian teachings. Nonetheless, these ideas and values, now taken simply as "the way things are," can be understood only with reference to their roots in this tradition.

Confucianism was an international tradition which deeply influenced the whole East Asian cultural sphere -- China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Though each country has given these ideas and values its own particular coloring, much of what is said here applies in some degree to other East Asian societies as well as Korea. We will be concerned here, however, not so much to discover what is uniquely Korean, as to discuss what is typical of Korea and different in important ways from what is western or American.

Family and Social Relationships

It is a common human assumption that there is something unique, something special about human beings which sets them apart from other creatures; but different traditions do not necessarily explain this in the same way. Different assumptions about what is that gives human beings a special dignity and value have ramifications which affect a culture's total value system.

The Greeks considered man to be unique in that he can think and so can make decisions for himself, while lesser creatures can only follow their instincts. In the Judaic and Christian traditions it is emphasized that man is a child of God, made in God's own image; each human being thus has a personal relationship with God and so in endowed with a dignity which sets him apart from other creatures.

The common western view of the dignity of man is drawn from these traditions. Man is human in that he is able to think and make decisions; therefore his freedom is to be respected. Each person lives in relation to God; therefore each bears a sacred and inviolable dignity, and in this dignity all men are equal, whatever their social status may be. Note that the focus in both views is on a special dignity possessed by every individual. This is one of the foundations of western individualism, a value which many Koreans, for reasons we shall see, find very difficult to understand or appreciate.

The Confucian view, which did much to shape premodern Korean society, is quite different. It is expressed clearly in the very first lines of the **Tongmong sonsup** (First Exercises for Youth), a primer often used during the Yi dynasty for beginning students: "Of all creatures between Heaven and Earth, man alone is most noble, and what is noble in man is that he possesses the Five Relationships." This is the approach to the question of human dignity one finds in virtually all Confucian texts. It is derived from one of the most valued of the Confucian classics, the **Mencius**, which gives the earliest full formulation of the Five Relationships:

> According to the way of men, if they are well fed, warmly clothed, and comfortably lodged but without instruction, they will become almost like animals. The Sage [emperor Shun] was concerned with this and appointed Hsieh to be Minister of Instruction and teach people human relations: that between father and son there should be affection, between ruler and minister there should be righteousness, between husband

> and wife there should be proper distinction, between elder and younger there should be proper order, and between friends there should be faithfulness.

This doctrine of the Five Relationships is the cornerstone of all Confucian moral and social teaching. It is not the mere fact of being related that is considered of unique value here --after all, animals have parents, mates, and often even leaders and "pecking orders" -- but rather the special level upon which these relationships are conducted. That is, what the doctrine of the Five Relationships teaches is that there is a distinctively human level or manner of relating to others, and only by learning to relate on that level does one act in a way worthy of a human being. When this uniquely human quality is lacking in relationships, human beings sink to a subhuman level of behavior.

What, we may ask, is this special human quality? In all of these relationships it is essentially the same, though it is manifested differently ("affection," "righteousness," etc.) in accord with the particular nature of each relationship. This quality is most easily expressed negatively: in relating to others, one does not seek one's own ease, convenience, or profit; that is, one does not act in a self-centered, self-interested way. That is why Mencius says that when only the things that are a matter of immediate self-interest are taken care of, such as food, clothing, and lodging (and one might expand the list to include everything one pursues purely for his own benefit), we are not yet on a really human level. In the Confucian tradition, self-centeredness or selfishness is viewed as the primary root of evil and disorder, and the special dignity of man is based upon the degree to which he can rise above self-interest in relating to others.

So while the typical American or western view focuses on human dignity as something inherent in each individual, the Confucian approach looks upon it as something arrived at by the quality of one's relationships with other human beings. Everyone has the potentiality of relating to others in this way, but not everyone cultivates that potentiality to the same degree of fullness; thus people in fact are not all equal in dignity, not all deserving of the same degree of respect and honor.

Americans have come to stress values such as independence of thought and judgment, self-reliance, creativity, and the courageous exercise of a responsible freedom. These are the values of being an individual, a person who can think and decide for himself without relying upon others; they are

summed up in the term "individualism," a word which expresses to Americans much that is ideal. Such values have their roots in the idea of the unique dignity of the individual, and they were further developed through early Americans' experience of severing ties with the Old World and striking out in new directions in an unchartered New World.

The Confucian approach, which emphasizes human interrelatedness and reflects upon what is required to relate properly to others, leads to a different set of values, such as reverence for others, harmony, proper order in society, and a keen awareness of what others do for one and what one should do in return. From this perspective, the limitations of the individualistic values are more apparent than their excellence: they seem to be qualities which center the individual in himself and cut him off from others, leading to pride, irreverence, and insensitivity to others.

In the frequent discussions of American society in Korean newspapers and magazines, *kaeinjuui* (individualism) is commonly criticized as the most serious flaw of Western society; Koreans' greatest fear regarding their own modernization process is that it will bring with it rampant *kaeinjuui*. This, they fear, would bring with it the disintegration of the family, rising divorce rates, the spread of homes for the aged, loss of respect for parents, teachers, and authority in general, and a high rate of crime reflecting a self-centered rending of the delicate fabric of the whole social order -- all of these being phenomena they see clearly evident in American society. An American may at first feel that this is a total misunderstanding, but as one becomes more attuned to Korean values one comes to see that although there may be a certain amount of misunderstanding and oversimplification in this view of individualism, there is also considerable insight as well.

Returning to the Five Relationships, one notes that all but the fifth, the relationship between friends, are conceived of as unequal, one person being in a superior position vis-à-vis the other. In the traditional East Asian societies a hierarchical differentiation of persons according to age, sex, virtue, learning, and social status was simply taken for granted, and even though modernity has brought increased flexibility in this regard, the same might be said of Korea today, for modern Korea is still a hierarchically structured society.

Americans hold equality to be an idea, and thus find it difficult to understand an openly hierarchical society. But the plain fact is that people are unequal in talents, age, moral qualities, wealth, education, and opportunity (which is linked to the foregoing factors) -- to name but a few categories. In a hierarchical society such as Korea's, this is recognized and reflected clearly in the forms of social interaction. ideally this does not mean putting people down and limiting them to something less than they could be, although such abuses naturally can and do occur, the real emphasis is not upon looking down upon the lowly but on giving proper reverence to those to whom it is due. Thus Confucian writings continually emphasize the need for reverence and deference to others and warn against the dangers of haughtiness and arrogance. One finds in contemporary Koreans a very acute sensitivity to these qualities, and haughtiness and arrogance in particular would rank very high on a Korean list of negative values.

Decorum

Closely connected with this emphasis on reverence is the traditional Korean fondness for *yeui*, the rules of proper and polite behavior. Confucians held *yeui* in high regard, both because its practice inculcated that sense of self-discipline and restraint which was regarded as the foundation of all sound character formation, and because it provided the forms of proper, dignified, and harmonious social interaction. Yi dynasty Koreans put such value upon the observance of *yeui* that the Chinese referred to Korea as "the country of *yeui*," a title in which Korea gloried.

In modern eyes the traditional emphasis upon a very strict adherence to *yeui* was somewhat overdone, and Koreans now frequently criticize their premodern society for an excessively externalistic formalism. Traditional Confucians assumed there was a direct link between one's inner dispositions and one's external appearance and conduct; their modern descendants, however, suspect that true concern for the inner spirit was too often lost in the severe and exacting attention devoted to external correctness. Nowadays there is much less strictness, but nonetheless a marked formality and sensitivity to what is appropriate in a given circumstance and social situation still is characteristic of Korean society. Korean

guests, for example, will rarely appear without bringing some small gift, appropriate to the occasion, as a mark of appreciation and good feeling toward their hosts.

American society, in contrast, has moved increasingly in the direction of breezy informality, and one accustomed to this casualness might initially be inclined to regard the formality of Korean society as negative and repressive. But experience frequently changes this opinion. In many respects *yeui* is like the grammar of a language: grammar is a restrictive set of rules only to one who does not know the language; when the language is mastered, grammar becomes one of the means of making expression and communication possible. In Korea the many interactions of daily life are graced by the presence of little rituals which express something: whether it is the inevitable shuffle in a doorway as companions try to get one another to go first, the proffering, refusal, and repeated urging on a friend or guest of a cigarette or dish of food, the careful tending to and refilling of a companion's wine glass, or simply the manner of handing something to someone, *yeui* provides innumerable ways of smoothing relationships and making them pleasant by small indications of good will, respect, or friendship. By contrast, American informality may well be crude and frustrating to one who is accustomed to having these means of expression at his disposal.

Age

An almost universal human concern is age, but cultures differ widely in their evaluation of it. American commonly want to become older until they reach their twenties, and proceed with reluctance beyond that decade; there may even be tears at thirty or forty, and some stop celebrating birthdays beyond a certain point, preferring that the advance in years be passed over in silence.

In Confucian society, on the other hand, age was one of the primary yardsticks of hierarchy, as is reflected in the third of the Five Relationships. "Between elder and younger there should be proper order." That is, the elder should always have precedence over the younger. The old saying which provided an age-based measure for degrees of reverence in social relationships is still commonplace in modern Korea: "If one is twice your age, treat him as you would your father; if he is ten years older,

treat him as you would your elder brother; if he is five years older, you make walk shoulder to shoulder -- but just a little behind."

While many young Koreans still feel that age should be accorded respect and precedence, the rapidly changing conditions of modern society have introduced a certain tension here, for younger people have a reason to feel they have been exposed to a world of ideas and values their elders are not in touch with. Particularly in scientific and technological areas, young people are equipped with new skills and knowledge which gives them capabilities those even a few years ahead of them may lack. While efficiency would dictate the advancement of the young and talented possessors of the newest skills ahead of less capable elders, this goes against deeply held values; when it does occur, it often creates an awkward and uncomfortable situation for all concerned. One still in his twenties certainly should be listened to, but it is hard for him to have the same "weight" as one twice his age. In academic life this is even more the case. While in America ambitious young newcomers frequently attempt to establish themselves by proposing new theories and aggressively attacking the established views of older authorities, in the Korean academic world such conduct would be considered most unseemly. One must bide one's time and wait one's turn rather than openly and aggressively challenge the views of one's elders.

While this situation can certainly be frustrating for the up-and-coming young, there are some advantages in maintaining this hierarchy of age. For one thing, it limits the kind of total competition which has become such a prominent and uncomfortable feature of American life. Further, there is the question of where, in terms of age, one locates the center of gravity of one's life. If the twenties are the peak, the downhill portion is long. Youth in a certain sense may be considered its own reward; to have a certain dignity and fullness postponed until one's forties and fifties or even later may be considered to add an overall profit to life's balance sheet. And actual old age brings with it burdens welcomed by no one; but if years and white hair are generally a source of respect in one's society, the final stage of life is relieved of much of the negativity so common in America. An old grandfather in

the streets of a rural market village in Korea carries himself with an air of dignity and self-respect rarely seen in elderly Americans.

Filial Piety

Three of the Five Relationships -- father-son, husband-wife, and elder-younger (brothers) -- directly refer to the family. Further, the relationship of ruler and minister (subject) was often paralleled with the father-son relationship, and friendship frequently took the form of a fictive kinship relationship; close friends even today frequently call each other "elder brother" and "younger brother", introducing both the intimacy and affectionate elder-youngster subordination of the family into their relationship. Thus traditionally the family stood at the center of everything. It was regarded as the model for government, which was paternalistic, and it was the training ground for all proper human relationships, the place where one developed the kind of qualities and awareness worthy of a human being.

Modern society is modifying the place and nature of the family in Korea. Government may still have strongly paternalistic overtones, but the family is no longer its theoretical model. And the dynamics of a modern economy favor a kind of mobility which works against the traditional ideal of the extended family unit, which would place grandparents, parents, and children all under the same roof and locate them in close proximity to a number of blood relatives. But the strength of blood relationships and the consciousness of family membership with its duties and rewards remains unlike anything commonly found in America today. An understanding of the family offers the key to that core of Korean values which is in direct opposition to Western individualism, and the key to that understanding is filial piety, the virtue most priced by Confucians.

In Confucian thought, filial piety provided the groundwork for all the other virtues, and its practice touched on every aspect of life. In its most limited sense filial piety involved reverence for one's parents and a selfless devotion to their well-being. But in fact it went far beyond this, involving not just certain external practices, but one's very way of thinking about oneself, with repercussions which touched upon every aspect of life. As the classical **Book of Rites** puts it:

> One's body is the body of one's parents passed on to oneself; in acting with the body of one's parents thus passed on, can one dare but be reverent! If in our bodily carriage we are not dignified and grave, it is unfilial; if we are not loyal in serving our ruler, it is unfilial; if we are not earnest in discharging our office, it is unfilial; if we are not faithful to friends, it is unfilial; if we are not courageous on the battlefield, it is unfilial.

In this view, it is improper to act based simply upon one's personal, private inclinations and desires" "While one's parents are alive, one may not venture to consider his person his own, not consider his possessions his own," says the **Book of Rites**. Other texts pushed this even further, warning against the danger of "privating" not only one's own person, but even one's wife and children. That is, the filial son or daughter (or daughter-in-law) was to set up no separate sphere of self-interest distinguished from, and not subordinated to the interests of their family, represented primarily in the persons of their parents.

The way of thought is founded upon a very serious and deep consideration of the basic biological facts of our existence: as the above passage puts it, "One's body is the body of one's parents passed on to oneself." The term *shin*, here translated as "body", also means "person"; the idea is not just that one's physical body, but one's entire person, one's whole existence as a human being, is fundamentally a continuation or extension of the existence of one's parents, just as they are continuing the existence of their parents before them.

Family

The family, in this context, is much more than just a group of related individuals living together, it is essentially a single life-force, passed on from generation to generation to generation. It encompasses not only the living but also the ancestors who have gone before and the generations yet to come in a single unity. One exists therefore not as an atomically isolated individual unit, but as a member of the transgenerational family, a link in the chair of life which stretches both into the past and into the future. One both benefits from all who have gone before and has the responsibility to continue past excellence and also to provide will both morally and materially for generations to come.

Thus a sense of self was inculcated in which an awareness of family plays a key role. In considering whether or not to do something, for example, not only personal desires but factors such as what it would mean for the honor and well-being of one's family would naturally be taken into account. Confucians scornfully referred to persons who simply pursued their own interests as "not knowing their root". That is, the actions of such persons were seen to betray an ignorance of the very nature of their existence; there could be no more fundamental wrongheadedness or lack of true humanity than this.

The traditional obedience to parents even after adulthood, and the subordination of personal interests to those of the family which is an essential part of filial piety, may strike those more familiar with typical Western values as an intolerable suppression of the individual. Whether it is "suppression" or "proper orientation," however, depends to a great extent upon the way persons are accustomed to think of themselves. When life is assumed to be the distinct possession of each individual, as in the familiar expression, "I have my own life to lead," what is entailed in filial piety would certainly be experienced as a kind of suppression. But when on assumes, as in the Confucian framework, that life is not only personal but also something possessed and lived in relation with others, it is natural to identify as one's own the goods and ills which affect one's life-community. In subordinating one's personal interests to those of a community with which one really identifies, far from feeling suppressed, one feels he is overcoming his limitations.

Western individualistic values and life-style have had an impact on modern Korea, and there is frequently a tension in young persons as they feel the pull of filial duty in one direction and the desire for a more unfettered management of their lives in another. But although this has somewhat relaxed familial bonds and lessened the degree of subordination to parental control, fundamentally nonindividualistic values persist, and it is doubtful that when the final compromise takes form it will bear much resemblance to Western individualism. Both family and social relationships of all sorts are characterized by a lively awareness of interrelatedness and interdependence which shows little sign of disappearing.

One clear indication of this is the persistence of *unhae*, "gracious favor," which plays a role in Korean society somewhat parallel to that of rights and duties in the more egalitarian societies of the West. Americans think of themselves as having rights which it is the duty of others to respect, even as they have the duty to respect the rights of others. One must learn to "stand up for his rights," to demand them when they are threatened or violated. These ideas have been exported to Korea, but while they are given lip service, they do not meet with broad acceptance in practice. Stamping one's foot and making demands upon others seems like a rather ungracious and demeaning form of human interaction; further, such a notion is poorly suited to interactions within a hierarchical framework. *Unhae*, favors graciously given and willingly returned, provides in such a context a much smoother, more harmonious, and more appropriate way of handling affairs.

One hears *unhae* mentioned most often in the contexts where a person feels indebted to someone. Closer analysis, however, reveals that the concept implies a twofold obligation: those in superior positions should grant assistance, *unhae*, to those who depend upon them and need their help; the recipients of this favor in turn owe a debt of gratitude which can be repaid whenever a fitting occasion arises. The kind of obligation involved in this is not so much a matter of duty in the strict sense as it is a matter of simply behaving in a fitting, human manner.

The gift of life and nurture one has received from one's parents is considered the most fundamental *unhae* of all; it is traditionally described as being "as vast and boundless as Heaven," that is, beyond the possibility of adequate repayment. Here we find the notion of *unhae* rooted in the same sort of awareness that stands at the source of filial piety, and filial service to parents is in fact often described as the response owed to their *unhae*.

The awareness, however, extends beyond the family circle to encompass all sorts of relationships in society; it amounts to a general consciousness of oneself as existing in dependence upon a whole network of relationships with people from whom one may expect assistance and to whom one owes assistance. One cannot survive in life without the help one receives from teachers, friends, elders,

superiors, various sorts of officials, and so on; and one cannot expect to receive without also giving. As an old saying put it, "Spread your gracious favor and just treatment of others widely, for in life you may meet again at any time. Do not make enemies or leave people feeling resentful; if you meet on a narrow road, it will be difficult to avoid them." (**Myongshim pogam**).

Thus instead of the idea of independence which is typical of American attitudes, the Korean idea might be better described as "interdependence." As a graduate student, for example, I considered it more or less a matter of honor that I should somehow finance my own education and not depend upon my parents for support. But while I was pursuing my research in Korea, I found that such an attitude generally puzzled rather than impressed Koreans; they assumed that if my relationship with my family was what it should be there was no reason they should not be supporting my education, even though I was over thirty at the time. To me dependence was something to be outgrown with childhood; to them it was simply a condition of life that you depend on others and others depend on you. The question in such a context is not one of becoming independent, but of types of relationships and way may fittingly be expected of them. The individualistic ideal of the "self-made man" who "stands on his own feet" and "owes nothing to anybody" sounds strange in a culture where the facts of human interdependence and community have for centuries been the object of the most serious reflection and careful consideration.

Personalism

Such differences have extensive ramifications for the way many affairs are handled in a society. In many sorts of dealings Americans tend to emphasize the objective elements. Decisions should be reached simply on the objective merits of the case and things should dealt with as "efficiently" as possible. That is, the focus tends to be mainly upon the business in hand and how to deal with that business, with less attention devoted to the fact that all such matters involve persons. Persons have varying sorts of status, personality and relationships. Furthermore, they have feelings, and are subject to "good days" and "bad days." But ideally such things, it is thought, should not make a difference; when they must be taken into account, they are often considered an unwelcome distraction from the real

issues. At the same time, and not surprisingly, one of the most frequent complaints Americans make about their own society is that it is so "impersonal."

In contrast to this, the Korean approach to things typically puts great weight on personal factors. While the objective, impersonal elements of a matter are considered, there is at the same time an instinctive weighing of factors such as the feelings and state of mind of the parties involved, and these are carefully taken into account. *Nuch'i*, "reading the eyes," the art of quickly and accurately assessing another's emotions, attitudes, and reaction or likely reaction to a given proposal or situation, is a highly developed and valued skill in Korean society. As an administrator in a small Korean college, I found that students would sometimes come to my office, spend four or five minutes talking about nothing much at all, and then leave, the *nuch'i* having told them that the time was not right for bringing up whatever business they had on their minds. My own approach, typically American, was that the business should stand or fall on its own merits and presented in a straightforward fashion. Koreans frequently find Americans to be exceedingly abrupt and tactless, while Americans often feel Koreans are too indirect and do not "come to the point;" each simply focuses on a different aspect of an interaction.

Objective values, such as efficiency and "getting things done," and human, interpersonal values, such as relationships and feelings, coexist with a certain tension in any society. When these values come into conflict, it is really not possible to say which emphasis is the better. If I am in charge of hiring for a company, should I hire the son of my friend (assuming he is basically qualified), or simply seek the most able person for the job? In terms of efficiency, the latter choice is clearly preferable. But it is also good and humanly fitting that my bond of friendship be something my friend's children can get real help from, and that my own friends should form a base of support upon which my children might rely. Talent and ability should be rewarded, but it is a cold and inhospital world if everyone must simply "make it on their own."

In handling conflicts between objective and interpersonal values, Americans would probably say that ability counts most but connections help; the Korean approach is more likely to be that connections weigh heavily but ability is also necessary. Thus, blood relationships, friendships, and school ties are of

great importance in Korean society, and it is frequently difficult for one to "get his foot in the door" as an outsider with no established relationships or connections.

This emphasis upon personal relationships of one kind or another contributes to both the strengths and the problems of modern Korean society. Korea presents the riddle of a society in which people at times seem to act with no regard for others and yet in other cases are willing to drop everything in order to be helpful and courteous; the riddle is solved only when one learns the difference between situations or interactions which are public and faceless and those which have a truly personal element. *Unhae*, which involves personal relationships, does not serve as effectively as a well-cultivated sense of rights and duties in smoothing the abrasiveness as people in faceless urban crows rub against one another. People cutting into lines at crowded ticket counters and pushing or shoving as they jostle one another to get on and off buses are unpleasant facts of daily life in large urban areas such as Seoul. On the other hand, in truly interpersonal forms of interaction one finds often a smoothness, graciousness, and considerateness equally unfamiliar to Americans: it is here that the strength and beauty of Korea's heritage shows most clearly.

Education

Korea has more college graduates per capita than England, and far more than even its rapidly growing economy can find appropriate jobs for. Starting with kindergarten, families are often willing to endure great hardship to send their children to the best schools and tutors in order that they may finally pass the highly competitive examinations to enter one of the better universities. Education must be numbered among the highest Korean values, and like the emphasis on values associated with interpersonal relationships, this deeply rooted in Korea's past.

In Yi dynasty Korea there was no greater success in life and no better way to secure a family's fortune than by becoming an official in the government, a goal coveted by many but attained by very few. Years of intensive study were devoted by hopeful candidates to preparing for the civil service examinations, the principal door to a career as an official. Korea thus entered the modern world with a firm conviction that education was the key to success in life; with the advent of modern colleges and universities, that path to success seemed broader and more accessible than ever before.

But the prestige of learning is founded upon more than the desire for success. In Confucian society learning stood, above all, for moral excellence. In the Introduction to the **Kyongmong yogyol** (Essential Key to Discipline for Youth), the great Yi dynasty philosopher, Yulgok, presents the traditional Confucian ideal of what education is all about:

> As for man's life in this world, except for learning there is no way to become fully human. What is called learning is likewise nothing other than the ordinary affairs of life: that a father should be affectionate, a sun should be filial, one who is a minister should be loyal, that a husband and wife should observe the proper distinction, that brothers should be friendly and the younger should reverence the elder, that friends should be faithful. . . . But if one does not study, his mind will be chocked with weeds and his vision beclouded; therefore it is absolutely necessary to read books and exhaustively investigate principle, so that the path one should follow will become clear.

In theory it was this presumed moral superiority of the learned man which was the basis of achievement to positions of responsibility and power. But whether or not one actually attained an official position, the reputation for learning itself brought with it great moral prestige.

Yi dynasty education certainly involved much more than proficiency in the Five Relationships, and in fact a highly polished and refined literary style might weight as much as excellence of character

in establishing one's career. Nonetheless, the ideals reflected in Yulgok's words deeply influenced the content and tone of education in the Neo-Confucian world of the Yi dynasty.

Nowadays the curricula of colleges and universities are modeled on those of Western schools and are largely devoid of any explicit moral content. This lack, however, has not completely altered the traditional conviction that the learned are somehow morally superior. No occupation is more prestigious than that of college professor; further, there is a tendency among college students to consider themselves as the only really "pure" group in Korean society -- a view shared by much of the populace.

The moral weight and authority with which the world of learning has traditionally been endowed brings with it significant consequences for contemporary Korean society; this is especially true in the political sphere. Confucian learning was essentially linked with government, and ideal of Confucian scholars was that their learning and moral sensibility should serve to constantly purify and perfect government. In modern society the institutional link between the academic would and that of government has been severed, but traditional attitudes nonetheless tend to make the educational institution the watchdog and foremost moral critic of government. Only the most secure of governments can easily permit unrestrained criticism from such a highly regarded segment of society; for many reasons, the national situation in Korea lacks that kind of security. As a result, the relationship between government and the world of higher education has become a very difficult one, in which the government has increasingly found it necessary to prohibit negative commentary from professors and to keep students under close surveillance and restrict their gatherings and activities.

Our purpose here is not to pass judgment on the rights or wrongs of this situation, but simply to make clear how deeply rooted values and attitudes associated with education and its meaning contribute to and complicate an area of great tension and difficulty in contemporary Korean society. Such problems are by no means unique or limited to Korea, but a consideration of the nature and the weight of the values and attitudes involved reveals that in Korea these tensions are unusually deeply rooted and difficult to resolve.

Male and Female

Two features of the Yi dynasty vision with regard to role expectations and types of values related to sexual differences are particularly relevant for an understanding of modern Korean society. The first is the *um-yang* (Chinese *yin-yang*) view of the universe, and the second is the Confucian ideal of proper distinction between husband wife.

While the West has frequently appealed to "nature" in supporting particular ways of distinguishing male and female roles, the Western concept of nature, notwithstanding the term "Mother Nature," is essentially asexual. Thus interpretations of what "nature" tells us about sex roles is relatively arbitrary and changeable. In contrast to this, the traditional East Asian view of the universe divides the operation of the fundamental forces of nature into two complementary and opposite forces, *um* (*yin*) and *yang*. With *um* is associated quiescence, darkness, softness, the Earth, and all that is feminine. With *yang* is associated activity, brightness, hardness, Heaven and all that is masculine. Traditionally everything in the universe was accounted for in terms of the interaction of *um* and *yang*, and the derivation of complementary roles for male and female in these terms was not seen simply an arbitrary, human convention; such role differences were considered rather to reflect the fundamental nature and structure of the universe. These concepts are deeply embedded in Korean language, customs, and symbols, and thus are still very much alive in the mid of modern Korea.

In one sense, *um* and *yang* are perfectly equal, for traditional thought emphasizes their mutual necessity and complementarily; neither *um* alone nor *yang* alone is complete. Each gives rise to the other, and their roles, though different, are strictly interdependent; together they form a single, complex unity. In the description of the roles, however, the priority of *yang* is beyond question. In the **Book of Changes**, the Confucian classic which has been the source of virtually all traditional East Asian thought concerning the universe, the first hexagram is pure *yang*, representing Heaven; its role is to initiate all activity. The second hexagram is pure *um*, representing Earth; its role is to follow the activity initiated by *yang* and bring it to completion. The male initiates the generation of a new life, but only in the female is that life nurtured and brought to completeness. The male is active in the affairs of society

and government, but only with the nurturing and fostering role of the woman in the home are the affairs of life rounded out and brought to completeness.

The leading, active role of the male and the quiet, conforming role of the female are thus thought to be unshakably fixed in the nature of things; it is based not on any supposed weakness or inadequacy on the part of the female, but simply on the organization of the universe. So even though she may be more talented and has a more forceful personality than her husband, the woman's role should be confined to giving helpful advice; she should never take over the role of decision-maker. This was fixed in the ancient Confucian doctrine of the "Three Followings": "When she is young, a woman should follow her father; when she marries, she should follow her husband; when he is dead, she should follow her eldest son." Although Western ideas have weakened this tradition somewhat, it still creates a very uncomfortable situation for a woman to be in a position or authority over men in Korea.

In addition to the *um-yang* view of the universe, the Confucian doctrine which emphasized proper distinction as the ideal between husband and wife has been of tremendous importance. In its practical application, this ideal affected not just husband and wife, but virtually all relations between the sexes, leading to an almost complete distinction between male and females activities in Korean society. The woman's role was "within," that is, within the home, which was her domain, while the man's role was "outside," that is, in all the affairs of society and life beyond the confines of the home.

In theory, the woman was to be subordinate to the male and follow him as Earth follows heaven. But in practice the role distinction was so complete that women enjoyed considerable autonomy in their own sphere of activity. The practical running of the household, often including the finances, was largely in their hands, and men were not to concern themselves with women's affairs any more than women were to involve themselves in men's.

The ideal of distinction between sexes went beyond the mere differentiation of roles, however, and has left its mark on all forms of social interaction. Males did their socializing with males -- and with professional female entertainers, the *kisaeng*; and the women interacted mainly with other women. Nowadays coeducation, Western ideas of romantic love, and the limited but growing practice of dating

are having an impact upon the younger generation. Nonetheless, most social interaction continues to be in groups of the same sex. Men frequently go out to dine and drink together after work; on weekends or holidays one can see groups of women going off on various sorts of excursions with high good spirits and much merriment. The impression one gets is that Korea is in many ways virtually two societies, with the world of men and the world of women each being must more distinct and self-sufficient than is the case in America.

The relative distinctness of male and female societies has as its natural counterpart a view of marriage which is quite different from the ideas current in America. Relationships with members of the opposite sex are the object of great emphasis and concern among Americans, and such relationships begin at a very early age. As persons mature and become capable of truly deep, lasting, and intimate relationships, members of the opposite six, particularly in marriage, become the focus of such relationships; thus an intimate relationship between husband and wife has come to be one of the primary values associated with marriage.

In Korean society such intimacy may or may not be part of a marriage; traditionally it certainly has not been considered the essence, the be-all and end-all of marriage. Marriage was considered principally as the matter of taking a girl into a family as a wife for the son and bearer of children to continue the family line. Being essentially a family matter, it was arranged between families rather than between the individuals, who may well have never even met before arrangements were under way. The interests of the two persons involved were certainly a matter of concern, but the whole matter was never thought of as an attempt to find a soul-mate for one's son or daughter. If a wife fitted well into her new family, caused no disharmony and served her in-laws dutifully, and finally bore a son, the marriage was a success whether or not a really deep affectionate relationship developed between the spouse -- as often it did.

Nowadays all this in flux because of changing family structures and the impact of Western ideas, nonetheless, intimate love and communication between husband and wife are still not the common focus regarding marriage. The overall social patterns which divide the sexes point rather to relationships

among friends of the same sex as the natural place for deep and satisfying interpersonal relationships, and this was the ideal fostered by the fifth if the Five Relationships, which emphasizes faithfulness between friends.

The result is that friendship between members of the same sex is a more developed and cultivated value in Korean society than it is in America, where the tendency is rather to look to marriage or its equivalent for the closest and most intimate personal relationships. What an American means by "friend" is frequently something quite casual, and friendships form and dissolve easily. Korean friendships tend to form more slowly and the bond thus formed is deep and lasting, the presumption being that friends are friends for life. Mutual sharing between friends is taken for granted, and much more may be asked of a friend than is common in America.

In light of the strong social and role divisions between male and female in Korean society, what may be said regarding the relative values attached to being male or female? No doubt if Koreans had a choice, the overwhelming majority would rather be born a man than a woman. Males occupy the predominant position in society, are less restricted in their freedom of movement, dispose of their lives more as they will, and in terms of hierarchy in general are in the more honorable position. Sons have been valued over daughters, partly because a son may contribute more to the economic well-being of the family, but especially because it is through the sons that the family line is continued.

But if Korea is in some sense a man's world in which a woman accustomed to American society might feel somewhat uncomfortable, one cannot conclude that Korean women in general are discontented and resentful, creating a tinderbox which will be easily ignited by sparks from the American women's liberation movement. One reason for this is that women's lib was preceded by two other kinds of liberation: liberation from housework by an array of labor saving devices, and liberation from child care by birth control, which makes possible either the convenient spacing and timing of babies or the option to have none at all -- an option which is being chosen by more and more American couples. In the wake of these liberations "housewife" and "mother" are becoming devalued identities in America. The woman who so identifies herself is more and more on the defensive, waiting for the next question,

"Yes, but what do you do?" -- meaning "What are you doing with your life that is meaningful? What is your career?" And it is above all in seeking careers in the former man's world outside the home that American women have discovered and reacted strongly to the fact that they are not yet considered the equals of men, not considered capable of doing the same job with equal expertise.

Korea is far from the situation for a number of reasons. Labor-saving devices are not nearly so common in the home, and thus for the vast majority homemaking is still a full-time job. Children may not be planned through birth control, but even when planned they are planned close together, as soon as possible after marriage, and in numbers usually ranging from three to five (ideally two boys and a girl, or three boys and two girls). The transgenerational concept of the family places great emphasis upon continuing the line, and this means that having children, especially sons, is in itself a high value -- so high, in fact, that it is the basic means for a woman to attain her full status in society. In the context of such values, it would be hard to imagine a Korean couple choosing to remain childless.

Further, the very strength of the division of male and female roles, which as we have seen in founded upon both the view of the universe and traditional Confucian ideals, has the positive effect of clearly defining values for a woman's role even while it makes it very difficult for women to enter into and compete in the man's world. There is a shared vision in Korean society that there is something important in life which women and only women can do, and that is childbearing and caring for the home and family. The Confucian tradition saw the home and family as the center of life's most important values, and hence the woman's role, which is so closely associated with children, home and family, is one of great value and importance in itself even though in many other respects the role of males may appear more desirable. Long centuries of Confucian reflection on these values support them in Korean society even while they are being more and more eclipsed by other types of value in American society. As more Korean women earn college degrees and gain professional capabilities which prepare them for roles traditional society never envisioned, there is bound to be increasing frustration and tension regarding the traditional limitations of the woman's role. But even when such limitations are modified, the values associated with the role of women as mothers and homemakers are so deeply

founded that it seems likely that in the future, as in the present, it will not be difficult for the ordinary Korean woman to find fulfillment in such a role of her needs for dignity, value and accomplishment.

Conclusion

The history of the great religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions of the world presents a vast panorama of human possibilities. Different visions of the way things are and what is important shape societies differently and in the end lead to distinctive experiences of life itself. But because we share a common humanity, it is possible for us to understand and appreciate these differences, and thus transform them from something that divides us from one another and causes misunderstanding into a source of deeper human understanding and mutual affirmation. We can move from the feeling that the ways of other peoples are odd to an understanding that they are good and fitting, even though they are different from our own ways. In so doing, we transcend our own isolation and become members of the larger human community.

LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS OF KOREA

James H. Robinson

Within comparisons of cultures and languages, perhaps no two are more dissimilar than Korean and American culture and the Korean and the English language[1]. The American finds that holes in the socks can become publicly embarrassing, that the hot (spicy) food is cold, that hot coffee is refreshing, that "yes" can mean nothing and sometimes mean "no," that breakfast looks the same as dinner, that politeness does not mean friendliness, and that a smile can mean a frown. The Korean finds that you can wear shoes in the house, that you can call older people by their names instead of their titles, that an American thinks of him or herself first and others second, that even people who are not married may kiss and hug in public, and that even educated people can be seen dressed shabbily.

These differences not withstanding, Koreans and Americans have one of the closest relationships between people from a western and a non-western country. In the history of this relationship, several million young Americans have served both countries on tour in Korea, tens of thousands have married Koreans, and tens of thousands have adopted Korean children, and over half a million Koreans have immigrated to the U. S., and each year about 20,000 can be found studying in American institutions of higher learning.

In an attempt to provide some insights into these differences, this paper will provide a contrastive analysis of linguistic, cultural, and educational differences between Americans and Koreans. This analysis is intended to assist American ESL teachers and university admission officers or foreign student advisors who have few or limited experiences with Korean students. Within each of these categories, concrete actions will be suggested for the ESL classroom teaching and admissions decisions or foreign student advising.

Linguistic Differences

Contrastive analysis suggests that Korean is one of the most difficult languages for Americans to learn (Diller, 1978, p. 100), and consequently, that English is one of the most difficult for Koreans.

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[1]A previous version of this paper was presented at the Advanced Professional Development Symposium on the Educational System of the Republic of Korea at the October 1988 NAFSA Region VI Conference in Columbus, Ohio.

Major differences in syntax, phonetics, sociolinguistics, and discourse structure cause this difficulty. These differences are so pronounced that translation demands changes in word order, in the case of nouns as subjects become objects, in part of speech as nouns become verbs, and in most cases the wording itself must be changed" (Park, 1979, p. 13).

Syntax

Differences between the syntax of English and Korean include: word order, prepositions, articles, use of subject deletion, and double negatives. First, the most obvious difference between the two languages is that Korean is verb final and has the following word order: topic, subject, object, predicate. Consequently, beginning students may produce sentences, such as: I home go; or My name Mr. Kim is. Because the verb is at the end of the sentence, the listener or reader often has to wait until the last word to understand clearly the main idea of the sentence. In addition, a Korean sentence can have a topic as well as a subject or object. In translation, a sentence may read: Fixing cars, John is an expert with sports cars.

Second, the Korean language has particles that can function as prepositions. This prepositional function is problematic, as the Korean particle comes after the noun phrase rather than before it and so could be called a postposition. These postpositions also have different functions: along with the functions of English prepositions, Korean postpositions also mark the topic, subject, or object of the sentence.

Third, Korean does not have articles, although it does have other determiners such as personal and demonstrative pronouns. The most common error is the deletion of articles, although some Koreans will overgeneralize and produce articles before every noun: the Lake Superior, the Korea. Korean may not have articles, because most Korean nouns are non-count nouns, such as water and sugar in English. Consequently, Korean has counters, such a lump of sugar, rather than articles. This predominance of non-count nouns also means that the difference between singular and plural is less distinct in Korean, although a plural marker does exist.

Fourth, an item that is occasionally omitted in spoken Korean is the subject. This omission can cause some confusion for the American learning Korean and can also affect the use of English by Koreans. Because of this ellipsis, translations of Korean into English tend to use a lot of the following English sentence structures: passive voice, "it" as a dummy subject, and "There is/are" structures. The result may be a more indirect form of expression. Use of these English patterns in the written or oral language of Korean speaking students is an indication that the students are translating directly from Korean rather than composing in English--thinking in English.

Fifth, Korean is also different from English, as Koreans can say: Yes, I don't...; or No, I do. Consequently, one needs to double check any such statement to make sure that one understands what the other has attempted to say. This confusion is greatest with negative Yes/No questions. One Korean student answered the question, Aren't you from North Korea, with an emphatic: "Yes, of course." The Korean student strongly affirmed the negative question with this statement, but the American listener told other students on the dorm floor that the Korean student said that he was from North Korea (Song, Y., 1990, p. 3).

Other differences exist as well, but this list should give an idea of some syntactic difficulties for Koreans learning English. Because of this vast gulf between the two languages, Koreans tend to rely heavily on grammatical analysis of English in their learning of the language.

Phonology

The pronunciation of English sounds is also a problem for Koreans, although the pronunciation of Korean sounds is less so for Americans. Problems arise for several reasons: some English sounds are missing from Korean, some sounds that exist in both languages are used in different ways, and Korean consonants do not have a final aspiration. First, English sounds that do not exist in Korean include: /th-dh/, /f-v/, and /z/. /Th-dh/ may be confused with /t/ or /d/, /f-v/ with /b/ or /p/, and /z/ with /j/. Consequently, one might hear, "Sank you," or "I sink so," "cup o' coppee," and "Let's go to the Jew (Zoo) (Park, 1979, p. 3-4). Second, the most typical problem for Koreans is the /r-l/ distinction.

Korean has both sounds but they are represented by one consonant rather than two and have rules for when to use each sound. As a result, one might hear, "That lice tastes good." Third, one of the most serious pronunciation problems is a lack of post-consonant aspiration in Korean. Consequently, final English consonants are difficult to distinguish. For example, "thirteen" and "thirty" are hard to perceive from a Korean speaker of English, because the final "n" in "eighteen" is not aspirated. Sometimes, to overcompensate for this problem, the Korean speaker will add an extra vowel: "Let's have lunchie."

Sociolinguistics

Some interesting sociocultural differences also exist in vocabulary items. Three of these difference include the use of "yes" and "no," the use of honorifics instead of the second person personal pronoun--you, and the four to six levels of speech from formal/polite to informal/intimate.

First, the Yes-No difference relates to Zipf's Law that the most frequent conversational words are the shortest (Zipf, 1965). In English, "no" is the shorter and so one would expect an American to use it more frequently that "yes." In Korean the opposite is the case, as "*nae*" (yes) is shorter than "*onyo*" (no). In short, Americans say "no" more easily and Koreans "*nae*." In social interaction, Koreans will, therefore, be reluctant to say "no" and Americans to say "yes." The resulting confusion can be frustrating for both. One major exception to this rule is communication from the top down--e. g. from employer to employee. Authority figures in Korea often say, "No." For example, if a teacher makes a request to the vice-principle, the first answer will probably be negative. One might say that the vice-principle is testing the importance of the request by saying, "No." A second request might still be negated. If a third request is made, however, it would be taken more seriously. University officials should not be surprised if Koreans come back once or twice with the seam request that was initially denied.

Second, the use of "you" in English and Korean is also quite different. In English, we use "you" quite freely and the same word is used for singular and plural. In Korean, the translated version of "you" is limited in its usage to a few situations: intimacy, expressions of anger, or when referring to

someone whose status is absolutely equal or outside the status system. In Korean, a multitude of honorifics or titles is used instead of this pronoun. The honorific may refer to the position of the referent: teacher, principal, director, or president. It may use a child's name to refer to an adult, as is sometimes done in English. Also, it my use familial terms, such as older brother and sister, and aunt and uncle for non-familial relationships. One therefore hears sentences such as: "Can teacher help me?" "Can I speak with Johnny's mom?" and "Older brother (older same generation male) knows better."

A third aspect of Korean discourse is the different levels of expression. While scholars disagree about how many levels of speech actually exist, it is important to note the changes in usage occur depending on whether one speaks to someone from an in-group or an out-group and on three criteria: plain/polite, intimate/authoritative, and familiar/deferential (Martin, 1964). These changes in usage may affect the verb endings, or the choice of vocabulary. Longer verb endings translate into more politeness, or authoritativeness, or deference, as the short "*An-yang*" becomes "*An-yang haseiyo*," and then "*An-yang hashimnika?*" or from "Hi," to "How are you?" to "What a pleasure it is to see you." For vocabulary, you visit someone's "honorable residence," but they would visit your "humble home."

Contrastive Rhetoric

Differences also exist in discourse or rhetorical structure. As Kaplan's research has indicated, the logic used in organizing both speech and written work differs from one cultural group to another. In diagram form, the English structure would be a straight line and marked by directness and, in most cases, with a deductive order (general to specific). Americans prefer oral and written forms that get to the point, that do not waste words, and that prove their point. Kaplan's research described the Korean or Oriental rhetorical structure as circular: beginning with a general statement, continuing with tangential references to the general statement, and finishing with the main idea (1966, p. 6).

Eggington refined this model into the four stages used to teach composition in Korea: ki, sung, chon, and kyul (1987, p. 156). This discourse structure is similar to the Ki-shoo-ten-ketsu model in

Japanese and is reported to have origins from the classical poetry of China (Hinds, 1987, p. 145). Ki means beginning and sung development, chon is a change to tangential material, and Kyul contains the main point of the text (Eggington, 1987, p. 157). Within American rhetorical patterns, this four stage structure might be similar to our structure for jokes with the punch line at the end, or to an O'Henry short story with its surprise ending. This structure is inductive and indirect in reference. The essay also would not necessarily contain support for the thesis. Respect for the written word translates into believing the written word and into less of a need for proof or support for a thesis sentence: less skepticism for what is written. Consequently, Korean written and oral discourse appears to "beat around the bush," and appears to never "get to the point." From the Korean perspective, the Korean form of logic and of communication is sophisticated, subtle, and artistic, while the American is too direct and often rude or crude.

In addition, as with Japanese (Hinds, 1987), the burden of coherence or understanding of both oral and written communication in Korean may be more on the listener/reader than the speaker/writer. In composition terms, writer based prose (written for the writer only) may be acceptable in Korean, while in English, it would only be acceptable in diaries or classroom notes, and reader-based prose (written for someone else to read) would be the preferred means of composition. Consequently, in Korea, if the reader does not understand an essay, the reader is generally blamed because of his or her ignorance and not the writer because of poor writing.

Because of these differences in the logic and organization of the spoken and written word between Americans and Koreans, communication between the two may be less than complete. In written form, the compositions of Koreans may appear choppy and difficult to decipher, even if the penmanship, spelling, vocabulary, and grammar are perfect. In oral expression, the comments of Korean students may appear irrelevant and digressive rather than to the point. Koreans may also have some problems understanding Americans. American directness may be so shocking that it causes silence and a completely frozen facial expression. Further, Koreans may be very frustrated, because they have to explain everything to Americans. This frustration comes from preferences for indirect over direct styles

of communication. The Korean relies on the listener to use a wide variety of contexts and clues to read meaning into an indirectly spoken message, but the American prefers that people "tell me what you mean."

These examples have merely provided a glimpse of the linguistic contrasts between English and Korean. From this glimpse, one might say that it is a true tribute to the human mind that somehow over time both Koreans and Americans have been able to learn each others' languages. Still, when communicating with Koreans in English, ESL teachers and university officials need to confirm all important utterances by rephrasing them into specific rather than general statements and assumptions about the subject of a discussion, to double check numbers, to avoid the use of yes/no questions and especially negative yes/no questions, and to be patience with discourse that never appears to get to the point.

Cultural Differences

If one defines culture in a broad sense as everything one says, does, and thinks and how one feels about them, a cross-cultural analysis of American and Korean culture would be unlimited. Consequently, this analysis will confine itself to the following: perseverance, politeness, obedience, playing things by eye, and face.

Perseverance

In Korea, *keunki* or perseverance is one of the two major characteristics by which Koreans characterize themselves. As McCune noted about the Korean, "...his strong, prodding diligence and his admirable forbearance in the face of troubles that would break lesser people, manage to help him exist and even flourish" (1956, p. 75). Perseverance for Koreans means that a goal is pursued until it is obtained in spite of the obstacles. The Korean national flower, the hibiscus, exemplifies this national characteristic of perseverance. Although the individual flowers only last one day, the plant continues to bloom throughout the summer.

Perseverance is a virtue with many positive aspects. For example, many Korean high school seniors live for studying, as their lives revolve around three actions: eating, sleeping, and studying. They may spend a whole year with only five hours sleep each night, as they study for the entrance exam to college. This perseverance for education has produced one of the most highly literate working forces in the world. The economic miracle that is Korea today also attests to this virtue. In 1953, Korea did not have a GNP. After staging a magnificent Olympic games in 1988, no one can deny that Korea has left the Third World behind. In everyday life, this perseverance can transform a Korean graduate student in chemistry who had never driven a car into a car mechanic. Through trial and error, this student perseveres until his fixes his carburetor. When parents reject a young woman or man's choice of spouse, perseverance gives the couple the strength to out-wait the parents for periods of up to eight years.

But, this virtue in excess can have a negative side, *ko-chip* or stubbornness. In education, high school graduates who fail the university entrance exam have been known to retake the test seven years in a row. In politics, this perseverance may manifest itself in factionalism. In a recent political election, the opposition leaders persevered rather than compromised and the result was that a candidate who they opposed very strongly won, as the opposition was split. In the admission's office of an American university, this perseverance may express itself in a student stubbornly pursuing a goal that you have denied him because of university procedures.

Politeness

Koreans are as famous for their politeness (*conkeun*), as they are for their perseverance. Politeness is an indirect form of verbal or non-verbal expression of both positive and negative emotions. The hot and the cold are cooled or warmed in order to be more palatable.

This virtue of politeness encourages social harmony. As Crane noted, "This great sensitivity to others in interpersonal relationships lends a graciousness to society that make for a very attractive people" (1967, p. 186). This sensitivity produces indirect forms of expression. Hwang has identified

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"hedges" as an important form of this indirectness in Korean. "Lexical hedges" include phrases that would be translated as "pretty much," "almost," and "perhaps," and "phrasal hedges" would include "sort of," "so to speak," and "in a sense" (1975, p. 152-4). In social relations, individuals are sensitive to the needs of others first. A wife who wants to buy a dress says that she has nothing to wear, or that she saw a nice dress at a department store. Young lovers have great difficulty verbally expressing their love for each other, but instead, rely on indirect means--a look in the eyes and a small smile. Sensitivity to the other means communication through indirect reference. This sensitivity also results in Korean hospitality to guests and the offers of help to foreigners. Americans, on the other hand, tend not to offer help to others until a request is made, as such an offer might be an invasion of privacy.

Politeness in a formal sense can be deadly, as when the boss uses polite forms of language to fire you. As a foreigner in Korea, the author was once fired from a job as an editor, but he did not realize it for about five minutes, because he was separated with such polite language and a very polite bow. One of the best ways to get rid of salesmen is simply to rely on politeness--deep bows and polite language. Politeness can also express itself in a smile that does not mean agreement but rather embarrassment over having a request denied. Americans need to realize that politeness of form can be completely separate from politeness of content.

Obedience

Obedience (*sunjong* or *bokjong*) to one's superiors is another important Korean cultural concept. Traditionally, the rules of obedience were an expression of the five Confucian relationships: king-minister, father-son, husband-wife, older-younger brother, and age mate friendship. In all but the last case, obedience was expected of the latter. In the modern world, the relationships of teacher-student, employer-employee, and senior-junior graduate of the same college also command obedience.

This obedience takes two forms: *sunjong* is obedience for love or loyalty, and *bokjong* is obedience for fear of the consequences. When the father asks the child to go buy some fruit at the corner store, the child has to obey no matter what is on TV. If the child runs the errand as an

expression of love or of respect for the father, this form of obedience is *sunjong*. If the errand was run for fear of the consequences, this obedience is *bokjong*. The same is true when a husband brings home a group of his colleagues late some night and tells his wife to prepare a dinner for them, when an elder sibling tells the younger to clean up a mess made by the elder, when a teacher asks a student to stay after school to help calculate grades, when the boss leads his office team in an all night session that means another evening and night away from home, and when a college senior commands a junior to drink another beer.

The key for ESL teachers and university officials is to establish one of the above relationships with their Korean students and to establish a relationship based on *sunjong* rather than *bokjong*. At the same time, this obedience may result in unquestioning silence to instructions from a foreign student advisor even if the orders are not understood, but as the instructions may not be understood, obedience may not mean that the student will follow the instructions to the letter. For the teacher, it may mean that objective evaluations of teaching methods and materials may be difficult, as students tolerate whatever is taught and are reluctant to criticize out of a sense of obedience to the teacher.

Nunchi

A fourth cultural characteristic that has differing manifestations in Korea and in America is the focus of sensory perception. Koreans tend "to play things by eye" but Americans "to play them by ear." In Korean, *nunchi* is a cultural concept, and it means "eye sense" (Kang, 1972, chap. 3; Park, 1979, p. 92; Martin, 1967, p. 364). The following example may help explain how the difference between "playing things" by eye and by ear:

> A Korean wife walks up to and stands next to her American husband, who is preparing food in the kitchen. The husband does nothing. The wife gets angry. The husband does not understand why. (Robinson, in press)

In this example, the husband was "playing things by ear" and the wife was eliciting the use of nunchi. By standing next to the cabinet, the Korean wife cued her husband to get out of the way so that she

could get into the cabinet. Ignoring the visual cues and waiting for the an audio, "Excuse me," the husband does not move. The wife was eliciting behavior through a visual cue, but the husband would only be cued by audio means. This type of mis-reception of visual and audio cuing can result in major misunderstandings (Robinson, in press). Conversely, visual cues are taken more seriously by Koreans.

Because of the tendency to rely on visual cuing, Korean students tend to be visual rather than audio learners and so ESL teachers need to use methods that are accessed through visual learning styles, and at the same, help their students to learn to use audio learning styles. In addition, teachers and university officials need to be more conscious of non-verbal communication channels: be more attentive to visual cues from Korean students and also be more cognizant of the effects of emitted visual cues, such as facial expressions. In general, Korean students will expect their American listeners to read more into the spoken word, and at times, will be very frustrated if they have to "spell out" everything for their American listener. Americans may question the honesty of their Korean students, because of the incomplete nature of a message.

Face

A fifth cultural item with different meanings for Koreans and Americans is "face" or *jae-myon*. Westerns appear more concerned about "gaining face" or "keeping up with the Jones," but Koreans are more concerned with "losing face" (MacMahon, 1975, p. 84). A comparison of American and Korean communication styles reveals that Americans desire self-respect whereas Koreans seek group respect (Park, 1979, p. 76). Consequently, Americans are concerned with "I" and try to gain "face," while Koreans are more concerned with others and try to maintain or protect "face."

A story might better illustrate the meaning of "face" in Korea:

> Imagine yourself a woman in a communal bath house. You have soap in your eyes and the steam further restricts your vision. You head for the door to the changing room, but by mistake open and walk through a door that puts you on the street outside. The outside door has no knob. Where do you put your hands? (Robinson, in press)

The Korean female storyteller answered this question visually by covering her face: an answer that few American or Western women would replicate.

For ESL teachers and university officials, the implications are various. After asking a question or for questions from students, do not be surprised by silence, and do not assume that what you said was understood or that no questions exist. For a Korean student, admitting a lack of understanding or asking a question would be a public loss of face. Silence protects face, but unfortunately can result in students doing the wrong homework assignment or not filling out the correct forms.

The above mentioned cultural differences between Koreans and Americans can cause confusion and miscommunication. American teachers and school officials need to be tolerate of the occasional stubbornness of their students, to realize that politeness does not mean respect, to establish positive relationships that elicit trust from Korean students, to elicit specific information when the student is vague or too general, to offer help and not wait until help is requested, to be aware of alternative channels of communication, and to respect the anxiety Koreans might feel over the "loss of face."

Educational Differences

Cultural differences also affect educational practice. Because of the differences in educational practice, Korean students face an "academic culture shock" when they enter the American and especially the ESL classroom. Korean educational practices that contribute to this culture shock include: 1) Confucian influenced teaching/learning process, 2) a "study ethic," 3) cooperation in the classroom, and 4) the concept of plagiarism.

Confucian Orthodoxy

In Korean education, the philosophy of Confucian orthodoxy manifests itself in what Westerners would call "rote learning." The methods, techniques, and practices of education in Korea are fundamentally different from those in the American and from the ESL classroom. The influence of Confucianism on education in Korea contrasts with the influence of the Western scientific tradition on

American education. The philosophy of Confucian orthodoxy was a belief that the world could be explained completely through the Confucian classics and that these classics had only one interpretation--the interpretation that had been formed through the ages by Confucian scholars (Rohlen, 1983, p. 49-50; Cleverly, 1985, p. 8-9). Because of these traditions, Korean students prefer teachers who give the answers, expect questions that have one right answer, search for the best way to say something, and assume that each expression is distinct and different from any other and has a place in some linguistic hierarchy.

Confucian influenced education in Korea emphasizes a uniform teaching method, teacher-centric instruction, passive learning, unquestioning students, rhetorical questions, and success in learning as measured by examinations. Because of teacher-centric preferences, students want to learn by memorizing the textbook, by taking notes from the blackboard, and by learning from a repetitive teaching method. Because of preferences for passive learning modes, students avoid eye contact with the teacher, are surprised when asked a questions, spend a long time puzzling over an answer, and are shamed when unable to answer. As for questioning, student questions for teachers are limited to office hours or after class. If a student asks a question in class, it would be a challenge, a slap in the face, to a teacher. Teacher questions in the classroom are limited to rhetorical questions that the teacher uses to introduce new material. Student participation is limited to recitation by a small number of students and choral repetition by the whole group. Lastly, examinations in Korea are quite literally the "tail" that wags the "dog" of the educational system: what one Korean observer called, "Examinitis Koreana" (Song, Y. I., 1978, p. 61). This emphasis on examinations, which comes from the Civil Examination tradition that Korea borrowed from China, affects instruction at all levels and the attitudes of students about learning (Robinson, in press).

In Contrast, the American system (and in particular ESL classes) stress eclectic teaching styles, student-centric classes, active learning, verbal activity, questions from and among students, and testing as a learning process. Because of these differences, ESL teachers and university officials will find that Korean students suffer from a rather severe case of "academic culture shock" when entering American

universities. Teachers need to use the virtues of the Confucian system to create a learning atmosphere within which the Korean student can acquire the skills needed to survive in the American classroom.

Study Ethic

Within this Confucian educational tradition, the strong emphasis, almost monomania, about education in Korea could be said to produce a "study ethic." This "study ethic" could be contrasted with the American "work ethic."

In Korea, parents believe that if their children succeed in school, they will succeed in life. Success or failure in admission to college, in particular the best colleges, determines the future job prospects, social status, and marriage prospects of almost every young Korean male and female. Families have mortgaged or sold their farms in order to send their children to college. The traditional success story was a the "poor but honest" young student who studied hard and passed the government examination to become a "high government official" (Underwood, 1977, p. 126). Today, a high score on the college entrance examination is the equivalent to passing the old civil service exams. During the one day of this annual college entrance examination, all of Korea stands still for these young hopefuls. Taxi drivers give free rides to students. Parents wait outside the test sites with food and drink. On this one day, the future of a whole age-group is determined.

In contrast, Americans believe that if their children work hard, they will succeed in life in the image of an Horatio Alger. This contrast does not mean that Koreans do not work hard or that Americans do not study hard; it is a difference in emphasis. To take this emphasis a step further, in Los Angeles, a famous athlete of the past lit the Olympic flame, but in Seoul, two students and a teacher lit the flame. For Korean students in the U. S., the culture shock may come from underestimating American students and the rigor of the American university system. This problem is particularly acute for Korean teaching assistants who provide instruction to American undergraduates

Cooperation

The American and Korean classrooms might also be contrasted by differing emphases on cooperation and competition. The American stress on individuality manifests itself with competition in the classroom. The Korean emphasis on social relations expresses itself with cooperation in the classroom. Cooperation (*hyupdong*) is one of the virtues that the educational extols on the walls of every school in the country.

While both these opposites exist in both classrooms, what may be termed cooperation in Korea may be called cheating in more competitive American classrooms. For example, an American professor in Korea called in two students who handed in identical term papers to discover that they had worked on the paper together and had no idea that the professor would consider this inappropriate. In another example, an American student refused to share his calculus homework with a Korean student who had problems completing his homework because he worked three jobs. The Korean student was shocked, and especially because on several previous occasions he had spent hours of his time tutoring this American student in calculus. In a third example, a Korean Ph.D. candidate was dismissed from school, because he had obtained a copy of the comprehensive examinations questions from his advisor's desk to which he had daily access. While the facts were clear, the reasons for the action were not. If the student assumed that the advisor had left the questions for him to read in preparation for the exam, then the advisor's actions would have been more in question. The student could have assumed that this practice was common for all students, for all foreign students, for all students in his department or simply thought that the list were examples of possible examination questions. These three examples demonstrate how cooperation in a Korean sense can be judged, unfairly perhaps, as cheating within an American context.

Definitions for cheating exist in Korea, but it is interesting that the slang form is taken from English--cunning. The rigorous testing system used in countries such as Korea result in an ambiguous attitude toward cheating. If you can cheat an unfair system, "more power to you." While the American educational system is not necessarily unfair, doing graduate work in a foreign language and culture can

be a difficult task that could appear unfair and create a situation where cooperative behavior is viewed as appropriate behavior.

Plagiarism

The concept of plagiarism across American and Korean culture may also create some problems for Korean students in American classrooms. Traditional ideas about scholarship and humanism may result in the copying of uncited material in the papers of Korean students.

In traditional Confucian scholarship, citations were generally unnecessary, as anyone who could read would know who was being quoted. Consequently, Korean students may assume that the professor will know who is being cited and what is being quoted and so not see a need for citation. They use the words of the "modern sages" rather than a paraphrase, for they could not presume to write it better than the "master." The use of the "master's" words is a sign of respect. In addition, with the lack of term papers in Korean university education, Korean students may not have any training in making citations. In other words, they do not know why they should nor how to make citations.

The ownership of ideas is also a foreign notion in Korea. Not sharing your knowledge with the world would be an unscholarly act. Also, waiting for economic remuneration through copyrights and patents before sharing ideas would be the prostitution of scholarship. While Korea's emergence as an economic power has resulted in a national system of copyrights and patents, Korea has still not signed international copyright agreements. By not signing this agreement, Korea opens the door for a variety of activities which Americans would condemn but which have reasonable explanations. For example, if a professor wanted to provide a updated textbook for a course in the "Sociology of Education," he might take excepts from several books on the topic in English and combine them with several English language articles that all would be translated into Korean by the professor or his graduate students. With few Korean language texts on the subject, this text provides college students with valuable information to which they otherwise would not have had access. In other words, proper observation of

copyrights would have limited the educational process and economic and technological development in Korea.

Combine these different concepts of borrowing scholarly work with the difficulty that a Korean student may have writing in English, and one finds that Korean graduate students in the U. S. sometimes compose their term papers by combining sentences or paragraphs from various sources. A typical essay may start out with a lot of problems, as the introduction is written by the student, and then get better throughout the middle with most of this material copied.

Conclusion

The above contrastive analysis of some linguistic, cultural and educational differences between Americans and Koreans was intended to help prepare ESL teachers and university officials for educational encounters with Korean students. With these differences in mind, the suggestions below are grouped into two categories: for ESL teachers and university officials for admission officials in admissions and international student offices.

ESL teachers should realize that the contrast between Korean and classrooms is probably greatest in the ESL classroom. Not only does the ESL teacher have to emphasize oral and reading skills and American rhetoric, but also the ESL teacher needs to be ready for a student who will undergo "academic culture shock," as the ESL classroom will truly be "an encounter of the third kind" for the Korean student. Efforts should be directed at teaching this new "academic culture" as well as teaching language. Special efforts might be made to introduce the Korean student to the competition of American classrooms and to American concepts of plagiarism.

For university officials, the above mentioned differences in language, culture, and educational practice can contribute to a mountain of misunderstandings. When the student arrives, officials should not be surprised if communication problems exist. Following the suggestions listed above may help officials understand better why these problems exist but not necessarily help in resolving them. One means of resolving them is to find Koreans on campus who can act as "cultural brokers." As most

campuses have at least one Korean professor on the faculty, admission officials or foreign student advisors might establish a relationship with this individual to help explain and to mediate problems that arise. The results can lead one on the road to a significant understanding of how much we can learn from our differences.

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THE NATIVES ARE RESTLESS:

ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON

A KOREAN UNIVERSITY

Fredric Marc Roberts

Chun Kyung-soo

Throughout the world, universities are often recognized as central societal institutions.[1] For example, Parsons and Platt assert that the university has often become "the lead component of an extensive process of change permeating modern society at many levels" (Quoted in McClelland 1980:1). Yet, surprisingly, McClelland has recently pointed out that:

> There is no widely accepted body of theory about universities and their activities . . . Educational, sociological, economic, and even psychological theorists and historians have occupied themselves far more with institutions of lower learning, for example, schools, than with universities [1980:17].

Even though educational anthropology is a field that has recently emerged into prominence in our discipline, there is an almost complete absence of comprehensive anthropological studies --theoretical or even descriptive -- of universities or colleges.

Here are presented the preliminary findings of ethnographic research on a Korean university. The principal investigators, an American and a Korean, hope that this primarily descriptive work will stimulate comparative studies, both within Korea and internationally. While the authors believe that this type of ethnographic analysis can contribute to much needed theory building, the primary goal of the study had, however, been pragmatic: to provide a portrait of university life that may help visiting foreign scholars, especially Americans, orient themselves within the Korean academic community. On the American's side, this research was, in fact, begun as a matter of survival. As a Fulbright Professor entering the very complex and often confusing world of a Korean university, his anthropological pride demanded that he not just float through the year, minimizing his contacts with the often bewildering and frustrating university. He wanted to try to make sense of what was going on around him, since it was so patently interesting. (Though one professor recently responded to this observation by pointing out that it might be interesting to the Americans, but it was painful to them, the Koreans.) His colleagues often seemed frustrated at finding themselves constantly sandwiched between their students -- demanding that they (the professors) take radical stances that were clearly

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This paper was originally published by the Korean-American Educational Commission in Korea Fulbright Forum, No. 1 (1984), and is reprinted with permission.

professionally disastrous -- and the government and administration insisting that they (the professors) exercise a type of control over their students that was abhorrent and/or impossible.

For the American, it was like being in a whirlwind without really being part of it. Sometimes the whirlwind took on physical existence, as hundreds and thousands of demonstrating students formed a scrum and ran chanting and singing around the university buildings or during the university's Foundation Festival when students turned and gyred around in step to the driving music of a farmer's band, in a thinly disguised form of protest.[2] Having grown up in the 1960s, he found that the sound of hundreds of thousands of students singing Korean versions of "We Shall Overcome" and "We Shall Not Be Moved" struck a deep responsive chord. Yet, of course, as a foreigner, he was not part of the whirlwind. One afternoon an undergraduate was telling the American how nowadays he spent many evenings in campustown drinking and discussing the agony of Korea with his fellow students. The American was having trouble understanding the student's English and was squinting in an effort to hear. Apparently, the student incorrectly interpreted this look as one of anxiety, and he responded: "You don't have to worry!" Korea is not your problem!" But while the American was not part of the whirlwind, it was difficult to feel uninvolved. Clearly, to many students and faculty members, his country was one of the major sources of the whirlwind in which they live. At the university's Foundation Festival, the American sat with other faculty members watching student skits that portrayed President Chun Doo Hwan as President Reagan's lackey and the saw the pair symbolically and gleefully assassinated by the students. Of course, this intense symbolic aggression was totally understandable. In the fall of 1983, the campus was still infiltrated by *chapsai* (pseudostudents or government spies). Student demonstrations often ended in clashes with the police, whose armor made them look like Imperial Stormtroopers in *Star Wars* and whose tear gas canisters literally poisoned the academic atmosphere. Male students considered to be troublemakers were being dismissed from the university and immediately drafted into the army.[3]

Teaching in a department and a college where students are pre-occupied by the social, economic and political problems of Korea and where students are heavily influenced by dependency theory that

suggests that Korea's agony is caused in great part by the "supposed" exploitation by the core countries, like the United States, it was hard for the American to pretend to be aloof and untouched, even when the references to this were humorous. For example, riding up on a train from Taegu with students returning from an Anthropology convention, the students chanted "Teacher! Teacher!" to get their professors to buy them some snacks. When the American bought them a box of Korean sweets, a colleague jokingly chided the students, in Korean, for exploiting the "capitalist imperialist".

The Korean author had been a student at the university that is the focus of the research, and he served for many years as a department assistant. He has only recently returned from the United States, where he earned his doctorate. His status at the university has changed completely, from a student before going abroad to being a faculty member upon his return. As he has examined his own career, he has been prompted to think about the nature of the university.

In trying to understand the university as a kind of social organization, the status switch from pupil to professor has been particularly interesting to him. He has had to learn to deal with senior faculty members, on the one hand, as colleagues and, on the other, as his teachers. He, also, found that students who were several years junior to him have felt uneasiness in relating to him as a teacher, when he was previously their "older brother".

Another factor that has particularly struck the Korean author has been the considerable change in the general political atmosphere during his absence from Korea. The new regime has proposed an "open" policy in every aspect of national policy. This has significantly influenced the university, which is an important part of the nation. The university has increasingly become a "public" educational institution. When he went to college, it was much more elitist. In particular, the number of students at the university has grown tremendously since his undergraduate days. He has been very much interested in how the increase in the student body has changed the nature of the university.

As an anthropologist, the Korean author has found the study of the university to be an important way of understanding Korean culture, which places such a heavy emphasis on education. Fi-

nally, this research has be intriguing to him since it has cast him in the roles of both informant and researcher, a true participant observer.

It will be obvious from what we say that the university that we are studying is Seoul National. It is customary for American anthropologists, at least, to try to disguise the identity of the particular community that was the subject of their research. In this case, however, that seems both impossible and foolish. Seoul National proudly and unabashedly proclaims its unique elite status. In his foreword to an English language introductory pamphlet (Seoul National University 1982, 1983) then President Kwon E-hyock (now Minister of Education) declared S.N.U. to be "the oldest and best national institution of higher education in Korea," and he claimed that the university is "educating the elites of leadership, creative mind and cooperative spirit." Faculty and administrators proudly point to the predominance of S.N.U. graduates in major positions in business and government. In an English language orientation movie about the university, the narrator, in a hypercorrect British accent, trumpets the same themes -- emphasizing the overwhelmingly large proportion of the highest scorers on the national university admissions test that choose S.N.U. Ironically, the musical score accompanying these proud elitist assertions is Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*.

In discussions with faculty members and students at S.N.U. and at other first-class Korean universities, all recognized that S.N.U. was different. All agreed that the students at S.N.U. were better -- more intelligent (at least as measured by scores on entrance exams). But there was disagreement over whether the S.N.U. professors were superior to their colleagues elsewhere in Korea. Interestingly, S.N.U. professors and non-S.N.U. professors sometimes criticized each other for a similar fault: lack of independence. Private university professors suggested that S.N.U. professors were conformists because they were government employees, pointing out that S.N.U. professors carried government identification cards. The S.N.U. professors argued that the private university professors were conformists because the universities they worked for were "owned", and professors there had to kowtow to the owners' wishes and preferences. In any case, all sides agreed that S.N.U., like the other major universities, was intensely inbred. Several S.N.U. professors made it quite clear that being an

S.N.U. graduate was an important prerequisite for being an S.N.U. faculty member. As one put it, any non-S.N.U. graduate would have great difficulty getting along with S.N.U. students and faculty. While an S.N.U. graduate might teach at Ewha or Yonsei, the opposite idea was generally held to be unthinkable or at least reprehensible. When I asked the professor at another first-class university why a very impressive middle-aged S.N.U. faculty member was not yet a full professor, she laughed and pointed out that he had been "parachuted" into the department. Administrators had put a great deal of pressure on the department to take on this non-S.N.U. graduate. However, this exception to the rule, a non-S.N.U. graduate who was an S.N.U. professor, in some ways proves the rule. If the "parachutist" was not an S.N.U. graduate, he also did not have any degrees from other Korean universities. His academic credentials were all from foreign institutions. Although it is tempting to be humorous about this snobbishness and inbreeding, they are actually very important and serious elements of the university and must be taken into account in understanding relationships among S.N.U. faculty members and between faculty members and students.

In any case, what we are going to discuss here is going to be only about S.N.U. and, at this stage, many of our observations will be slanted by our more extensive experience in the Department of Anthropology and in the College of Social Sciences, which has approximately 90 faculty members. Also we will be dealing, to a great extent, with fragmented and anecdotal material, since we are still in an early stage of our collection of systematic interview data from faculty members and students in a representative sample of university departments.

In putting our comments in perspective, it is also worth noting that when our research team rated various university departments along several dimensions, e.g., prestige or status, from one, lowest, to five, highest, the Department of Anthropology was given a rating of five in political activism, and when in the fall President Kwon D-hyock hosted the visiting foreign professors at a lunch with the Deans, he commented sadly that the students in the College of Social Sciences were just "too intelligent" (implying for their own good). We believe, however, that while the College of Social Sciences may not be totally representative of S.N.U., it is particularly interesting because the tensions in the

university are probably most clearly and graphically reflected there, where political ideology and scientific theory are often perceived, at least by the students, as closely tied, if not identical, and where concern with Korean society is the main intramural as well as extramural interest.

In any case, this is work "in progress", and our interpretations are very tentative, and our quantitative data are still being collected. However, while our systematic interviewing is still underway, we have already collected a variety of date in other forms:

1. Participant observation;
2. Numerous informal interviews with professors, students and administrators;
3. Systematic monitoring of coverage of university issues in Korean and English language newspapers;
4. Systematic monitoring of the content or writings on the Freedom Wall of the College of Social Science;[4]
5. Class discussions and papers in undergraduate courses in Educational Anthropology and in Language and Culture;
6. Descriptions of aspects of university life by students in an introductory anthropology course;
7. Papers and research proposals by graduate students in courses on Anthropology Methodology and Psychological Anthropology (e.g., on student life and singing, student stress, student drinking, student ideology versus behavior, student demonstrations);
8. Materials collected by seniors in a class on Anthropological Field Work;
9. Papers by two undergraduate research assistants on aspects of student life (e.g., campustown, male-female relations, freshmen orientation, medical students versus anthropology students); and
10. Weekly discussions with student assistants.

In fact, this research is a team product -- a team including our assistants (a senior in anthropology and a sophomore in anthropology).

The complexity of a study of Seoul National is perhaps most dramatically revealed in the difficulties involved in trying to set the boundaries, trying to place the university in physical and social space. On the Tourist Map of Seoul, the main campus of S.N.U. which is the focus of our research, is at the extreme southern border, in Kwanak. one wonders if the map would have been shorter if the

university were not there. Further, the map shows the university to be nestled among forested mountains. The campus seems physically isolated amidst great natural beauty. When asked how they liked being out in Kwanak, away from the center of the city, students often responded by praising the campus' clean air. Even the main gate to the university is at a considerable distance from the campus buildings, and the S.N.U. subway station is so far from the campus that a shuttle bus will be necessary. The college town is also so far from the campus that a shuttle bus will be necessary. The college town is also far from the university's main gate, which probably has a major impact on campus life.

The modern buildings of the campus itself are arranged in quadrangles that ascend the steep lower slopes of the surrounding hills. One of the highest buildings is the faculty club, which was once the main building of the golf club that used to occupy this beautiful site. But if you wish to go further up the hills, there are hiking trails that will take you to the rocky peaks. This physical isolation is in marked contrast to the situation before 1975, when the S.N.U. campus was in the heart of downtown Seoul.

Of course, this idyllic setting, which might suggest an ivory tower tradition, is totally misleading. On the one hand, it is clear that many non-university people have a deep interest in higher education, with S.N.U. at its pinnacle, and, on the other, many S.N.U. students and faculty members are deeply concerned with national affairs.

It is worthwhile keeping track of newspaper articles on the university precisely because they are so frequent. Even foreign language papers, like the **Korean Herald**, regularly carry news of the campus. While these stories are often about student demonstrations, and thus emphasize the students' privileged roles as critics of society and opponents of the government, they are also often related to admissions issues and reflect the recognition that entrance to an elite university is a crucial step in becoming part of the privileged class. When this year a high scoring student chose to go to a less prestigious Buddhist university, that was deviant enough for it to receive national television coverage. The period when students apply for admissions to universities is covered as though it were the Olympic games, with S.N.U. as the premier event. At this moment, admission is to a particular department of S.N.U. and

not to a college or the university as a whole. Until recently, even to transfer from one department to another within the university required that a student retake the admissions test. A student can be rejected by one department while another student with a lower score is admitted to a different department. Thus the concerned public keeps close watch on what scores were needed for entrance into each department and how many applications have come in so far.

We should point out that we emphasized that **at this moment** admission is on the basis of department because this has changed over time. The changing admissions policies have an impact on the composition of the students in a particular department. For example, the current senior class in anthropology was chosen when admission was initially to a college. Only in the sophomore year, on the basis of freshmen grades, were students admitted to a department. At that point, the Anthropology Department was still relatively new and did not have very high status. As a result, a number of students in the current senior class had apparently only gone into anthropology because they could not get into other departments. Predictably, some in this class are not particularly enthusiastic about the discipline. By contrast, the current freshmen and sophomores were admitted to the Anthropology Department directly, and there is some tension between the underclassmen and the seniors.

In any case, one reason for the news coverage of the university and its policy is precisely because change seems to be one of the only constants. And the power of the Ministry of Education means that changes can occur swiftly. One anthropology junior wrote a paper in the fall of 1983 on the serious impact of a sudden change that occurred while he was in high school. Special admissions tests to specific colleges were abolished, and the multiple choice preliminary admissions test became almost the sole criterion for admission. As this student and many others point out, the purpose of high school is primarily to prepare students for the university entrance exams. This sudden shift in policy had serious repercussions for the many students who since their first year of high school had been following a strategy of preparing intensively for the college-specific exams as well as the general multiple choice test (both were required at some excellent universities, including S.N.U.). Obviously, also, if high school

education is primarily geared to the entrance exam, the exam will also dictate the intellectual skills that students bring with them to the university.

Many students commented on this. For example, one undergraduate pointed out that the skills in taking multiple choice exams learned over the years were actually detrimental in the university, hindering abstract thought. Another argued that during the many years of practicing choosing one answer from four, it was "Worthless to think for [yourself], by [your] own, logic or to meditate. [The student's] duty is to select one thing out of given ones." As a result, in part, of that type of training, he felt it was "a great agony" for students in the university to learn to think individually, creatively, and logically. It is further worth speculating whether extensive and almost exclusive preparation for multiple choice exams in high school is related to the tendency of many social science students, at least, to believe that there is only one correct answer to a problem.

There are many other elements of high school life that relate to the university (e.g., the impact of the elimination of the elite high schools, the role of high school alumni associa-tions, and the effect on university students of being in coed institutions for the first time since elementary school). However, those will have to be dealt with elsewhere.

Faculty and student interest in and connections with the wide society are also clear and obvious. One of the striking aspects of teaching at Seoul National is the extent to which one grows accustomed to seeing your colleagues on television or noticing their pictures next to their articles or columns in magazines and newspapers. They also often seem to be active on lecture or seminar circuits and frequently serve as advisors to government and business groups. We will return to this issue in greater detail later, but it is clear that as a result of the general respect for education in Korea, the relatively small number of professors, and the elite position of S.N.U., the university's professors are in great demand. In fact, there are a number of nicknames for those professors who, in the eyes of colleagues and students, overindulge in these extra-curricular activities, "telefessor" -- (a professor who often appears on television) and "talent" -- (an academic willing to talk publicly on any subject). Another even more negative term is (*saibi*) pseudoprofessor -- (e.g. government spokesman).

The interest of students in national affairs is even more obvious to anyone who has had any experience with Korean universities. Here we will just take note of the fact that while students in the social sciences bring that preoccupation with the nation directly into the classroom and their studies, professors in other fields have stressed that concern with the nation's future is typical even of students in technical disciplines, like engineering. In fact, one professor emphasized that students feel obligated to be concerned with these matters since they recognize that they represent virtually the only element of Korean society that has any opportunity to express serious opposition to the government. As the elite, S.N.U. students feel this obligation most strongly.

It is well known that opposition to the government is a modern Korean student tradition. The official and unofficial calendars of the university reflect that. April 19th and the anniversary of the Kwangju incident during the spring and the former student day during the fall are university dates a important as midterm and finals weeks. A cat and mouse game goes on between the administration and students, as the former tries to set up the official calendar so as to decrease the importance of the students' own calendar. For example, this spring the midterm week included April 19th. The students responded by celebrating that occasion one week ahead of time.

We might suggest here that, ironically, the students' romantic and radical nationalism, which is expressed in anti-government demonstrations, is fostered, in part, by the government itself, which strongly stressed patriotism in the earlier grades of school. The idealistic view of Korea provided in high school and before apparently makes students easy prey to conversion to government opposition when upon entrance to the university the seniors give the freshmen a radical and critical account of recent Korean history.

Service to the nation is also stressed through the two years of required military training for men at the university, and the period of mandatory military duty after graduation. It has been suggested that university military training also helps to unify the student body against the government.' The training on and off campus (the male freshmen and sophomores go away for a week of army training each spring) gives students from the many different departments and colleges of the university an opportunity to get

to know each other and to learn to operate as a group. It is curious that in the scrums they form during demonstrations, the students usually show far more discipline and precision than in their ragtag marching in their special military uniforms. The military is also present on campus in the forms of juniors and seniors in the R.O.T.C.

We should also point out that post graduation military service obligation for men has an important effect on the university. Since entrance into a graduate program and earning a masters degree can now mean a greatly reduced period of time in the army and, also, service at a higher rank, graduate school may appeal to students for other than academic reasons. This can both influence the orientation of the graduate students and the attitudes of the undergraduates, especially the senior men preparing for graduate admissions exams. In anthropology, some male students who took a rather cavalier attitude toward classes as juniors have, in their senior year, begun to study more diligently.

Demonstrations are extremely dramatic; however, we think that one can view them as a spectacular manifestation of a wider phenomenon in the university. That is the existence at Seoul National of what, after C.P. Snow, we call the Two Cultures -- in this case, those of the professors and the students. Of course, in the United States there is, also, a separate student culture, but it usually focuses primarily on extracurricular and non-academic matters: sports, dancing, dating, music, and drinking. At S.N.U., the student culture seems to pervade almost all aspects of university life. (Some radical students talk about developing a distinct student culture independent of the bourgeois and cultural imperialist influences of the wider society).

In fact, we would suggest that although students at many American universities have far more extensive formalized powers and rights vis a vis professors (e.g., in required student evaluations of faculty, seats on important university councils, ombudsmen protecting students' rights, etc.), students at Seoul National have far more control over how essential aspects of the university are run. As the Dean of the College of Social Sciences pointed out, he spends much of his time trying to persuade students, a sentiment echoed by chairmen of departments as well. This student culture and power are rooted in the ability of students to organize themselves into a solitary group and present a united front, at least to the

outside (which often includes professors, as well as administrators and the government). This power is built into the very structure of the university. A very striking characteristic of Seoul National is the centrality of the department unit to students as well as to faculty. As we have earlier mentioned, admission to the university is by department. While this orientation of students to the department is reflected in demonstrations when students march behind their department's banner, it has a very concrete day-to-day manifestation in the student rooms of each department. There students hold meetings, conduct study groups, chat, and sing. The walls and bulletin boards are filled with schedules of student organized events, and the blackboard is crammed with messages from one student to another. This student room is often attached to the department office. These rooms are strictly student territory, and, at least in the social sciences, professors hesitate to enter and then do not linger there.

Interestingly, the figures of authority in the department office are not faculty members but the department assistants, graduate students who are responsible for much of the administrative work of the department. These department assistants serve as a kind of liaison or buffer zone between students and faculty and between faculty and the central administration.[5] The assistants are especially important because the department chairmen often have relatively little power, that position usually being rotated among the senior faculty. Traditionally, appointment to the position of assistant was considered the first rung on the ladder up to professorial rank, and many present day S.N.U. professors have served as assistants. Today, this pattern is not quite as clear-cut. However, for a professor who has served as a department assistant, those years will be considered in determining his salary scale.

While the university has its own official freshman orientation, in the College of Social Sciences, loyalty to, or at least identification with, the department is also strongly emphasized by the rites of passage and orientation run by the department's own students. The senior students begin to socialize the entering Freshmen into the department's student culture at a very early stage. For example, this spring on the day of the physical examination for candidates, even before official admittance to the university, the anthropology upperclassmen held a welcome party for the entering freshmen. The party

was attended by almost all of the freshmen, more than ten sophomores and ten juniors and seniors; that is more than fifty students. The party included speeches, singing, conversation, and, of course, drinking.

In anthropology, at least, there are also weekly general student department meetings, often followed by "afters", when students gather at a wineshop in campustown for drinking and talking. In addition, there are athletic events and M.T. (membership training), when the students usually go to a suburb and stay up all night talking.

It is important to emphasize that not all students participate equally in these meetings and group activities. There is often, even in the social sciences, what is called the academic group, as opposed to the S.M., or Student Movement group. At least in anthropology, the members of the former are more likely to be found in the library and the latter in the department office. As one student wrote, those who dislike the activist atmosphere "enter the library to study alone against the noise of the Acropolis" (the large open space between the library and the university headquarters building, where most major demonstrations now take place). The student, also, commented on "the problem in the university between students in front of the library and inside the library." In fact, freshman year often involves a struggle for each student as he or she tries to decide which student faction to join. However, it is our strong impression that, in general, even when the academic students disagree with the activists, their dissent is much more likely to be expressed as nonparticipation rather than active opposition. Several undergraduates pointed to the "silent majority" of students, for the Student Movement group, while a minority, is able to politically dominate the campus because it is unified by a single ideology. By contrast, those in the academic group are far more diverse, splintered, and in some cases alienated. Above all, the common student identity and bond, in opposition to professors, administration, and the government, are of overwhelming importance.

At least in the social sciences, this student culture includes a powerful intellectual component, for associated with what we call the Two Cultures are also the Two Curricula: the official curriculum (the ideas, theories, and approaches that the professors espouse and teach) and the hidden curriculum (those that the students support). The makeup of the hidden curriculum can be seen by looking at the

books on the desks of the graduate students. These books are often radical and on the problems of the third world (e.g., including neoMarxist and dependency theory analyses).

(While these books may not be the center of the professors' courses, they are often the subject matter of the student study and discussion groups. These groups are indicators of intellectual curiosity. Often, they also reflect a profound interest in the problems of Korea. One undergraduate pointed out that in their courses social science professors are not free to deal with Korean current affairs, unless they espouse the government position. The students try to fill that gap in their own education through joint independent study.

In fact, the differences between the students' and the professors' intellectual interests and orientations can sometimes lead to direct confrontation. One professor in the College of Social Sciences became frustrated and angry when students in one of his graduate seminars did not adequately prepare the assigned readings but instead were talking "out of context" (i.e., about the ideas of the "hidden curriculum"). The professor chided them: "If you don't follow me, don't take my class! I will not be your advisor! Why come here [to S.N.U]? Go elsewhere!" (Of course, in Korea for a student who wants to be a member of the elite, there really is no equivalent alternative to S.N.U.).

The study groups, also, reflect the tremendous importance of peer group interactions among students. The concept of study is far more broad for Koreans than for Americans, including as a major goal the maintaining of close and harmonious relationships with fellow students. Given, on the hone hand, the great significance of the department to the students and, on the other, the personalistic nature of many Korean social institutions, this makes a great deal of sense.

The importance of peer group interactions may also be related to a pervasive element of student intellectual style, at least in the social sciences. This is the common assumption that there is only one correct or "true" theory and only one important subject to be studied. Students who have unique theoretical interests or problem area concerns may find themselves under intense pressure from their fellow students to conform and drop their aberrant approaches. This also means that even in intellectual matters students often have more impact on each other than do their professors. Many

professors complain that they can influence their students only until the students get back among their fellow students. Some students respond that in terms of the theories in which they are interested, their fellow students are often more knowledgeable than their professors.

Here we would like to add a personal comment. When the American originally came to Korea, it was, in part, to get a broader background for his cross-cultural study of individualism. When he mentioned this to James Palais, a leading Koreanist at the University of Washington, Palais commented (at least half seriously) that the role of individualism in Korean culture could be summed up very easily: there is none. The American author would suggest that the very powerful peer group dynamics found among the social science students may reflect their implicit recognition that, in fact, many students are highly individualistic, and a great deal of formal and informal pressure must therefore be put on them to keep this aberrant culture countertheme under control.

In fact, although we have stressed the ability of the students to form solidary groups, it is significant that several social science professors complained that today's students were more individualistic and ego-centric than the professors' own generation had been. These faculty members felt that students were now far more competitive with each other. One professor even lectured his class about the need to form good friendships, since they would be so important after graduation. He pointed out that his classmates still gathered together two or three times a year. The professor felt that if all you wanted to do was study, you could do so without college. The relationships developed among students and between students and professors are the difference between college and self study. Curiously, this analysis was echoed by a student at a department meeting in the College of Social Sciences where future demonstration tactics were being discussed. The student commented that "In these days we experience individualization and atomization in the university and by the education system."

In terms of intellectual style, it is probably also important to mention that the students in the social sciences at S.N.U., at least, show a decided preference for abstract theory rather than concrete or empirical research. This is true even in social work and anthropology, where field work and practical

experience are elsewhere regarded as essential. While students often justify this in terms of the need to develop a broad and "true" framework for understanding Korean society, it is also possible to interpret this phenomenon, on the one hand, as a continuation of the Confucian gentleman-scholar tradition and, on the other, as a good defense mechanism. For the government might find empirical and concrete studies of urban poverty, for example, more threatening than abstract theoretical discussions that are only comprehensible to a small group of like-minded intellectuals.

Professors and students at S.N.U. often comment on the fact that students must begin to line up early in the morning (6:30 is the time usually mentioned) in order to get seats at the university library. But it is important to recognize that they are usually not a ne library to do research but to study. Furthermore, for a university of its caliber, the S.N.U. library seems to have inadequate collections, at least in the social sciences, and we suspect in other fields. The significance of this, in the present context, is that the poor library facilities also have a considerable impact on the intellectual style of the students, at least in the social sciences. Even advanced graduate students have little or no experience in bibliographic search. They are not used to examining the complex and controversial literatures that often develop around theories. This helps maintain the authoritarian approach to theories that they often take. It is, also, related to the way in which the limited set of books the students do have -- especially radical ones -- frequently gets treated as a corpus of sacred texts to be discussed or given allegiance without regard to the extensive critical literature that has grown up around them.

Here it is worthwhile to provide some historical perspective. In discussions with professors in a wide variety of disciplines -- from pharmacy to sociology -- about the availability of foreign language texts, a common comment what that whatever deficiencies there may be at the university now, today the situation is vastly better than when they (the professors) were students. One professor who was a student in the Sociology Department in the late 1960s recalled that his course on English language texts covered only a few dozen mimeographed pages in an entire term. The Xerox revolution has had a vast impact on today's Korean universities.

We might point out that in the social sciences the inadequate library facilities are partially compensated for by the extensive book collections of the professors. One major role of the professor seems to be to provide students with new books. When a professor gets ahold of an important recently published book, students and colleagues alike quickly ask to be able to make copies for themselves.

In many ways, perhaps the best way to think about the university is in terms of change. Because S.N.U. is so intensely inbred (its professors have so often been students here), the faculty members are acutely aware of how the university has altered, and the students are aware that when their teachers went to S.N.U. there was a different atmosphere and different expectations.

It is particularly interesting that many professors recognize that today the university makes far more demands on students than in the past. It was frequently pointed out by professors that at least in the social sciences, today's students read far more than they (the professors) did in their student days. Also, the curriculum, especially at the graduate level, is today far more tightly organized and rigorous than in the past. There are many reasons for this, and we cannot go into them here in any detail. However, we would like to mention that there seems to be a strange convergency in this regard. On the one hand, President Chun Doo Hwan publicly chides Korean university students for not studying as hard as their peers in other advanced and advancing countries. Also it is widely believed that the Ministry of Education required quota of failed students (in almost all departments, the university was supposed to take in 30 percent more students than it would allow to graduate) was part of a strategy to make students more competitive with each other.[6] On the other hand, many recently returned young American-trained professors also try initially to impose a highly competitive model (that of U.S. graduate schools) on their Korean students. We suggest that the powerful student peer group dynamics, at least in the social sciences, may act as a defense against those increasing demands made by authority. In some ways, the student culture -- at least in the social sciences -- is a highly conservative and traditional, in the sense of attempting to moderate or contain competitiveness in favor of an emphasis on good personal relations. And, in fact, this emphasis on personal relations may be very adaptive for

the many students who will work within the framework of the Korean government and business bureaucracy.

In any case, having dealt, if only superficially, with student culture, it is important to turn to the professor culture. Most crucial is to recognize that professors' relationships with each other are deeply rooted in their student days. The present junior professors are almost inevitably the former students of the senior professors of their department. On Teachers Day, while the students were bringing the anthropology faculty members flowers and other gifts, one junior professor was treating to former teachers who are now his senior colleagues in the department to lunch. When asked about the recruitment of new faculty members, professors often mentioned that a key factor was the ability of an individual to get along with other members of the department. It is striking how much of the faculty member's social life may be focussed on the university (e.g., eating dinner or drinking with colleagues after work) and how often academic events may become social ones (e.g., in anthropology, monthly faculty meetings take place at restaurants and after M.A. presentations faculty members and graduate students may go out together to eat). Of course, this fits in with the patterns typical of Korean business.

In any case, one impact of this important criterion is that a very brilliant student who is short on social skills may not be considered as desirable as a prospective faculty member as a student who is not quite as good academically but is more socially polished and adept. One natural science professor commented that he knew his department initially had serious reservations about recommending his appointment because as a student he had been known to be somewhat eccentric.

One reason that S.N.U. professors feel that being an S.N.U. graduate is an important prerequisite for being an S.N.U. faculty members was that then the department's professors will have been able to observe the candidate since his or her freshman year. It was emphasized that faculty members began to pick out potential future professors very early in the students' undergraduate days.

Of course, the large number of young faculty members in the social sciences and the natural sciences who earn their doctorates abroad, especially in the United States, would seem to moderate the

inbreeding. However, the period abroad is often seen pragmatically, as just a matter of getting the prestige credentials necessary to obtain a job at a first-class university. Even while in the United States, the students are acutely aware of the Korean academic job market and aim their choice of specialties towards it. In turn, the faculty at S.N.U. keep close track of their prize students abroad. When departments in a college negotiate about which will get the new positions provided by the Ministry of Education, each department often has in mind which of their former students are ready to come home from overseas.

In discussions with S.N.U. professors educated abroad, one is struck with how few problems they say they had in adjusting back to the university's system -- or at least to the other professors. This may be related to the fact that due to inbreeding a newly returning professor is very often rejoining a department whose faculty members he has known since his freshman year. Furthermore, if he has been chosen to join the S.N.U. faculty, he has almost certainly long shown a talent for fitting into the system and especially getting along with his seniors.

This concern with personal knowledge of potential faculty members both as scholars and as social beings makes a good deal of sense within the structure of the S.N.U. system. Until fairly recently, initial appointment also entailed a grant of virtual tenure. Even today, when there is initially a system of shorter term contracts, administrators and faculty alike recognize that, in fact if not in law, a young professor will be a lifelong member of the department. There will be few, if any, opportunities to correct a mistake in recruitment.

In the academic security system at S.N.U., initial appointment is tantamount to tenure, and is complemented by a salary scale that is dependent primarily upon years of service at the university, with no provision for merit raises. Thus, in terms of promotion, tenure, and salary, S.N.U. is not affected by the supercompetitive publish or perish syndrome typical of most American universities. A number of professors and administrators have suggested that this noncompetitive atmosphere is also related to the very small size of the academic community in Korea. Not only within each department but also within each discipline, virtually all professors know each other personally. There is the ever-present danger

that critical comments on academic work will be taken as personal criticism and seen as a loss of ace, leading to damaging rifts. Since young faculty members are associated closely with seniors who are their mentors, even criticism of juniors can lead to trouble among elder statesmen. Several editors of academic journals pointed to this personalism as one of the problems of intellectual life. One S.N.U. professor who is an editor of a social science journal added that he had seriously alienated a close friend when, as editor, he rejected an article the friend submitted. A number of social scientists also commented on a general lack of a critical tradition in their disciplines. We should make it clear, however, that apparently in the natural sciences this situation is not as acute, and even within the social sciences the norms are slowly changing.

Although the publish or perish syndrome is rare in the social sciences at S.N.U., that does not mean that little gets written or that the few professors who seem to spend most of their time playing **paduk** or go game in the College's professors' lounge are typical. In the College of Social Sciences, in fact, many professors seem to be prolific publishers in both the academic and nonacademic press, and, as we have pointed out, many work as advisors to government and business. Actually, some social scientists suggest that a key problem for the development of academic social science in Korea is precisely that professors (and especially S.N.U. professors) are so much in demand for doing either nonacademic work or providing advice in areas that are outside their scope of expertise that very little accumulation of solid academic achievement takes place. Again the structure of the university may explain, in part, this phenomenon. Not only does the university generally ignore merit in its salary scale, but the difference between junior and senior professors in salary is apparently relatively small. Also, the status of professors in S.N.U. is exceedingly high. One young faculty member commented that though he probably could easily live on his salary, having to keep up the style of life expected of him as an S.N.U. professor financially stretched him badly. Writing books and articles and doing translations that pay by the page, getting consulting fees, giving public lectures with honorariums, obtaining research grants from which money can be used for personal purposes can all be seen as adaptive economic strategies, ones that produce maximum financial returns when there is maximum turnover (i.e., fast

work). One professor pointed to the many cars parked outside the Social Science Buildings and commented that when an offer comes in to do some work, even if it is outside of one's interests or expertise, it is always tempting to think of it in terms of paying for the car, the gas, or the insurance.

It is crucial to point out, however, that there are serious disagreements about this entrepreneurial approach to scholarship. As we have mentioned, terms like "telefessor" and "talent" indicate the scorn that some, including faculty and students alike, feel for those types of activities.

In fact, it is important to emphasize that even among the professors in the College of Social Sciences there are considerable differences. One structural difference mentioned often is the generation gap. One younger social science professor responded to the idea of the university's two cultures (professors' and students') by suggesting that, in addition, there were distinct gaps between the cultures of younger professors and their seniors. In particular, the academic world necessarily reflects Korea's complex history. The senior professors in social science were trained under the Japanese and often in Japan itself; while the middle-aged and younger professors often received their advanced degrees from American or Western European universities. We would suggest that it is possible that the strong inbreeding of S.N.U. can be seen as one way in which the university is able to cope with the serious generational differences that might otherwise tear it asunder.

This strong inbreeding is an especially potentially powerful binding force because in many key relationships it is expressed in a way that suggests fictive kinship. That is relationships within the university seem to be modeled on kinship relationship, which of course accords with the Confucian precept that: "King, teacher, and parents should all be treated the same way."

The fictive kinship bonds are emphasized very early. The Dean of the College of Social Sciences pointed out that when the Freshmen enter, many parents come to him and ask him to educate their children as though they were the Dean's own son or daughter. The Dean is also personally responsible for anything published by the students of his college. Professors are supposed to be personally responsible for their advises. Among the students in departments in the College of Social Sciences, senior students are to be addressed by juniors as older brother or older sister. In at least one

department in the College of Social Sciences, outside of school the younger professors also call their seniors who were **not** their own professors "older brother". At holidays like New Year, when individuals are supposed to pay their respects to older relatives, students are expected to pay their respects to their professors. And on January 1, the S.N.U. professors also gather at the campus for a celebration. At graduate student weddings, it is often senior department professors who acts as master of ceremony and delivers an address on proper married life. In fact, we have often thought that to fully understand the dynamics within each department and within each discipline, it would be necessary to do an intellectual kinship chart, tracing the lines of intellectual descent. One social science professor bemoaned the fact that during the Korean War a great scholar in a related field was captured by the North Koreans. He described the effect on the discipline in kinship imagery: an important branch had been prematurely cut off. A similar type of kinship imagery was used to describe how S.N.U. departments attempted to establish branches in second class universities by getting their students placed there as professors.

Among professors, as within a Korean kinship group, degrees of seniority are carefully kept track of and recognized. A minute study of how junior professors specifically greet the various senior ones in the College of Social Sciences faculty lounge would probably reveal a fine tuned sense of this hierarchy. On the practical side, professors in several fields pointed out that senior-junior cooperation among faculty often meant that the junior did the work, and the senior put his name on it. In turn, of course, the junior professors depend upon their seniors for patronage.

If this strong inbreeding often expressed in a fictive kinship idiom has been a major bond bridging generation gaps in the past, it may be a measure of the seriousness of the present generation gap between students and their teachers that, at least in the social sciences, many professors see a serious deterioration in that type of deferential behavior. As we mentioned earlier, young professors recently returned from abroad indicate that they have little trouble readjusting to the Korean system, but at least in the social sciences, they seem to be troubled by the behavior of the S.N.U. students. They see a major change from their own student days. For example, in anthropology on January 4th, 1984, when the students were supposed to come to pay their respects to the professors, only a very

small percentage of the students attended. When the department went out on a week of field work, many of the upper classmen simply refused to go. A professor who asserted to me how deferential Korean students still were confessed the next day that all the students in one of his seminars had simply not shown up that afternoon. Faculty who live in the Professors' Apartments near the university's backgate report that drunken students returning to the dormitories from the wineshops down the hill can sometimes be heard calling out insults and taunts to them: for example, "Democratic professors come out!" Perhaps, the tension between deference and defiance towards professors appeared most dramatically to the American in the fall of 1983 during a demonstration in the Social Sciences quadrangle. Students were seated together clapping and singing. Professors were standing on around the periphery watching. But occasionally a professor would spot one of his advisees among the demonstrators, and the professor would go and grab the student by the arm and attempt to pull him away. Usually the student would get up, but then he would walk over to another side of the demonstration and sit down again to resume clapping and singing.

Professors especially complain about the two-facedness of the students. Students nod their agreement to what the professors say when they are in their presence, but then they go and totally ignore it once out with their student peers. Younger professors, however, even described situations where they were personally attacked or criticized by students to their faces, something they consider to have been inconceivable in the past. In fact, several social science professors who described in detail their first year or two back at S.N.U. clearly found that time to be extremely painful, at least in terms of their relationships with the students. The younger professors felt themselves to be under heavy critical scrutiny by the students, who were checking them out to see if they (the younger professors) subscribed to what the students considered to be "true" ideologies and theories.

One factor contributing to this tension, at least in the social sciences, may be that the present generation of S.N.U. students includes those who see years of study in the United States or Western Europe as a period of brain-washing into Western forms of thought, a kind of intellectual imperialism. Among many students, there is a strong feeling that Korean social science must undergo a process of

indigenization, so it can develop its own unique approaches to the problems of Korea. Ironically, the very critical approaches to Korean society that these students currently take are often themselves products of the West (e.g., neoMarxism, dependency theory, etc.).

A social science graduate student confessed to the American that he felt terribly torn. He realized that there would be great intellectual and practical advantages in going abroad to get his Ph.D. However, he felt a deep moral commitment to stay in Korea. He said that he and many other students especially admired one of the College's professors who had received his Ph.D. in Korea and always emphasized Korea's particular problems. This desire to stay in Korea for all advanced training may be a growing trend in the social sciences. This could have an important impact on the nature of graduate study in the departments in which the best students usually went abroad for their doctorates so that only the masters programs were first rate, and the Ph.D. programs were neglected and of little importance.

In trying to understand the tension between professors and students, it is important to also take into account the sheer growth in the size of Seoul National. With over 20,000 students on the Kwanak campus, the university is overcrowded. Students may feel alienated on an overcrowded campus, and the fictive kinship type relationships that operated successfully when the university was smaller may not work in an institution as large as Seoul National now is.

Also, the paternalistic norms of the past are, in some ways, poisoned or perverted by attempts of the government to use them as a means of politically monitoring students. Nowadays, when a professor asks to see his advisees, it is all too often only because the administration has requested that he try to persuade the students against radical activities. The Chairman of a department may find responsibility for his students an unpleasant duty when it may often involve students being held by the police.

For their part, students, also, often feel troubled about the quality of their relationships with their teachers. For example, a study of stress on campus done by a graduate student found that students reported having almost no conversations with their professors. The vast majority of the students questioned felt that when they visited a professor in his office, the latter's "face response (or

attitude) was expressionless" (Park 1984). Of course, this partially reflects the traditional hierarchical and formal relationships between student and teacher. However, just as clearly, it portrays the strain produced by the current political situation on campus.

In conclusion, although we have emphasized the tensions that exist on campus, it is crucial to recognize that within S.N.U. a tremendous sense of solidarity and group consciousness still exists, even crossing the border between students and professors. Some students may accuse their professors of being "pale intellectuals," too timid to lead the fight for democracy. However, the students generally, also, realize that such behavior on the part of the faculty would be professionally suicidal. Also, students may sense that (at lease in the social sciences) many of their professors, though not as theoretically pure or activist as the students would wish them to be, do share with the students certain goals and ideals (even when disagreeing over tactics). As one professor pointed out, if the faculty did not have a certain measure of sympathy with the students' politics, the professors could make life much harder on their pupils. Also, the elite status of S.N.U. and its inbred character give the professors a sense of pride in their students and a sense of identification with them, even when professors are being irritated or even harassed by the students. The fact that the S.N.U. students are indisputably the best in the country means that the professors gain some of their prestige from their pupils as well as vice versa. This was reflected when the American mentioned to a number of S.N.U. professors that he had heard that while graduates of universities like Younsei were often willing to help their former professors (e.g., when the professors were planning trips abroad), S.N.U. graduates generally refused to help their ex-mentors. The reaction of the S.N.U. professors to this observation was one of price: "Oh well, our students are just more rational than the Yonsei students, who are usually just emotional creatures!"

References

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End Notes

1. This study was supported by a research grant from The Korean-American Educational Commission. During the research period, the American was also a Fulbright Professor of Anthropology at Seoul National University. Miss Kwon Sug-in and Mr. Ko Sung-joo, undergraduates in the Department of anthropology of Seoul National University served as research assistants on this project. Their intelligence, sincerity and diligence were invaluable assets for the research team.

2. The Foundation Festival celebrates the establishment of the university in 1916.

3. During the spring term, the Ministry of Education initiated a campus autonomy policy. Under this system, the government undercover agents were to be withdrawn from the universities, and the police were to be summoned to the campus only by the university officials. Clashes between the students and the police now took place only at the university gate, when the demonstrators would attempt to march out of the campus. In the spring of 1984, the Ministry of Education was also considering abolishing or altering the system of suspending college student activists.

4. In the spring of 1981, partially in response to the new policy of campus autonomy and partially as a protest against the mass media coverage of campus events (which the activists considered to be distorted by government control), the Student Movement began to put up writings and posters on the outside walls of university buildings.

5. Many of the bureaucrats at the university's administration headquarters are selected and appointed not by the university by directly the Ministry of Education. A common complaint voiced by professors is that the autonomy of the Ministry of Education officials means that academics who are administrators, as well as professors, often have little influence over important policy decisions.

6. The Ministry of Education has indicated that it will be liberalizing this quota system policy.